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WILSON'S

TALES OF THE BORDERS

AND OF SCOTLAND:

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative.

WITH A GLOSSARY.

Revised by

ALEXANDER LEIGHTON,

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WILSON'S

TALES OF THE BORDERS,

AND OF SCOTLAND.

JUDITH THE EGYPTIAN; OR, THE FATE OF THE HEIR OF RICCON.

"The black-eyed Judith, fair and tall,
Attracted the heir of Riccon Hall.
* * * *
For years and years was Judith known,
Queen of a wild world all her own;
By Wooler Haugh, by silver Till,
By Coldstream Bridge, and Flodden Hill:
Until, at length, one morn, when sleet
Hung frozen round the traveller's feet,
By a grey ruin on Tweedside,
The creature laid her down and died."—*Border Ballad.*

More than three hundred years have elapsed since the people called Gipsies first made their appearance in this country; and, from all that I have been able to trace concerning them, it seems to have been about the same period that a number of their tribes or families proceeded northwards, and became dwellers and wanderers on the Borders. Their chief places of resort, and where, during the inclemency of winter, they horded or housed together, were, Kirk Yetholm, Rothbury, Horncliff, Spittal, and Tweedmouth. I believe that there are none of them now in Horncliff, which, on the bringing in of the muir, ceased to be a refuge for them; and there are but few in Spittal. But, in Rothbury and Kirk Yetholm, they still abound, and of late years have increased in Tweedmouth—that is, during the winter season, for they take to the hedges as soon as the primrose appears, and begin their wanderings. The principal names borne by

the different tribes in these parts are Faa, Young, Gordon, Bailie, Blyth, Ruthven, and Winter. Their occupations are chiefly as itinerant muggers or potters, horners or "cuttie-spoon" makers, tinkers or smiths and tin-workers, and makers of besoms and foot-basses. They are still, with very few exceptions, a wandering and unlettered race, such as their fathers were when they first entered Britain. At Kirk Yetholm, however—which is their seat of royalty on the Borders, and where they have a lease of the houses in what is called Tinkler Row, for nineteen times nineteen years, on payment of a quit rent—they have not been so neglectful of the education of their children as in other parts of the country.

At the period of their first appearance in this kingdom, the land was overrun with thieves and vagabonds, who, in the severe and sanguinary laws of Queen Elizabeth and her father Harry, were described as "*loyterers*" and "*sturdy beggars;*" and it is more than probable that many of these, finding the mode of life followed by the gipsies congenial to them, associated with or intermarried amongst them, and so became as a part of them; and this may account for many, calling themselves 'gipsies, having European, or, I may say, British features. But the real gipsy there is no mistaking—their dark piercing eyes and Asiatic countenance mark them as distinctly as do the eyes and peculiar features of a Jew. (By the by, I wonder that no searcher after the marvellous has endeavoured to prove them to be a remnant of the lost tribes of Israel.) Like the Jews, they are scattered over the whole earth—like them, they are found in every land; and in every land they remain a distinct people.

Who they are, or whence they came, are questions involved in considerable mystery. Their being called Gipsies or Egyptians in this country, I hold to be a popular error which they themselves propagated. Egypt, from the earliest period, was distinguished above all lands for its soothsayers and divin-

ers; and, as the chief occupation of the wanderers then was (and in many places still is) fortune-telling, they had cunning enough to profess to be Egyptians, or natives of the land wherein was taught the mysteries of rolling away the clouds which conceal fate and futurity. They have neither the language nor the manners of the Egyptians. No reason could be assigned for their leaving the land of the Pharaohs; and, although the gipsies of the present day profess to be Egyptians, they can bring forward no proof in support of the pretension. From all that I have read concerning them, it seems to me to be clearly proved that they are natives of Hindostan, where they formed a part of the lowest caste of Indians, called Pariars or Suders—a class held in detestation and abhorrence by the other castes. That the gipsy clans have a language peculiar to themselves, and which they frequently speak amongst themselves, is well known. It is not a written language; and they have endeavoured to conceal a knowledge of it from the people amongst whom they dwell. They have called it *gibberish;* and it has been very generally believed to be nothing more than what is usually understood by that term, or that at most it was a sort of *slang*, similar to the phrases used among thieves. This is an error. So far as those who have examined it have been able to ascertain, the secret language spoken by the British gipsies appears to be, with but trifling corruptions, the same as that which is spoken by the Indian caste of Suders in Hindostan.*

* We subjoin a few words as specimens. They are taken from the Glossaries of Grellmann and Richardson.—Ed.

Gipsy.	*Hindostanee.*	*English.*
Bebee	Beebe	An Aunt.
Mutchee	Muchee	Fish.
Can	Kan	The Ear.
Gur	Ghur	A House.
Riah	Raye	A Lord.
Dai	Da'ee	Mother.
Mass	Mas	Food.
Nack	Nak	The Nose.
Loon	Loon	Salt.

But a stronger proof that the gipsies scattered over Europe derive their origin from the Suders of India is demonstrated by the facts that the Suders were the only people who professed the art of palmistry—that they, like the gipsies, are a wandering race—that their occupations are almost identically the same, being fortune-tellers, dancers, and wandering musicians—that the smiths amongst them go about exactly in the same manner as the tinkers, in this country—that, like the gipsies, their favourite food is that of animals that have died of disease—that, like them, they have no fixed religion—and, like them, they endeavour to conceal their language. And the certainty of their being originally the same people is further strengthened, from the Suders having fled in thousands from India, during the murderous ravages of Timur Beg in 1408, which corresponds with the period of the first appearance of the gipsies in Europe. And that they are not Egyptians is strongly proved by the fact, that there are tribes of them in Egypt, where, as in other countries, they are regarded as *strangers and foreigners.*

I may have wearied the patience of the reader with this long and perhaps prosy introduction; but there may be some to whom it will not be uninteresting, as throwing a light on the probable origin of a singular people, of whom Judith the gipsy was one. And now to our story.

One of the chief men amongst the gipsies on the Borders, at the beginning of the last century, was Lussha Fleckie, who was only inferior in authority among the tribes to King Faa, who dwelt at Kirk Yetholm, and boasted of reigning lord over a *free* people. Lussha's avocations, like the avocations of all his brethren, were mere apologies for idleness. He was one day a tinker, on another a grinder, and on a third a wandering piper. He was a man of great stature and uncommon strength, and renowned for his exploits as a fisher and a sportsman.

The name of his wife was Mariam, and they had a daugh-

ter, called Judith, who, as she grew up towards womanhood, became known throughout Roxburgh and Northumberland as the Gipsy Beauty, or the Beautiful Gipsy. The appellation was not unmeritedly bestowed; for, though her skin was slightly tinged with the tawny hue of her race, a soul seemed to glow through her regular and lovely features, and the lustre of her dark eyes to throw a radiance over them. She was tall, and her figure was perfect as her face—it was symmetrical and commanding. Yet she was at once conscious of her beauty and vain of it, and her parents administered to her vanity. They had her fingers adorned with trinkets, her neck with bugles; for Lussha Fleckie, like most of his race, was fond of gold and silver ornaments; and, amongst others, he had in his possession a silver urn, which had been handed down to him through generations, and in which his fathers, as he now did, had deposited the fruits of their spoils and plunder, until it was filled with rich coins as a miser's coffer. He therefore, although a vagrant, was not a poor man, and could afford to deck the charms of his daughter. Judith was early initiated by her mother into the mysteries of the sybilline leaves—her education indeed extended no farther; and, at the age of fifteen, she was an adept in the art of palmistry. The proudest ladies in broad Northumberland or fair Roxburghshire eagerly submitted their hands to the inspection of the beautiful fortune-teller. The searching brightness of her dark eyes seemed to give a prophetic reality to her words; and, as she caused them to kindle with apparent joy or become transfixed at the discovery of coming wo, her fair and high-born patrons have trembled before her, and inquired, "What is it, Judith?" And, being a favourite with them all, for they both loved and feared her, her person was bedecked with their cast-off garments.

It was early in summer when about forty of the Faa people encamped near the foot of the Eildon Hills. A few

minutes served for the erection of their portable village in a secure and sheltered situation, and speedily, supported on pieces of crossed branches, the caldrons swung over the crackling fires, each of which blazed fierce and merrily from between two stones. Savoury exhalations impregnated the air, and gave token of a feast. The banquet being spread upon the sward, when it was finished, and the brandy cup had been sent round, Lussha Fleckie took up his Northumbrian pipes, and began to play a merry reel. Old and young, men, women, and children, started to their feet, and joyous

"Tripp'd the light fantastic toe."

Judith glided through the midst of them, with her bright waving tresses falling on her shoulders, as queen of the glad scene. Of her it might have been said—

"A foot more light, a step more true,
Never from heath-flower dash'd the dew;
Even the light harebell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread!"

Her partner in the dance was Gemme. Græme; and in his veins also flowed gipsy blood. Gemmel was now a youth of twenty, and one of the most daring of his race. A passionate enthusiasm marked his disposition. In agile sports and feats of strength he had no competitor. In these he was what Lussha Fleckie had been. He boasted of his independence, and that he had never placed a finger on the property of friend or neighbour, nor been detected in levying his exactions on a stranger or a foe. His merits were acknowledged by all the tribes on the Borders; and, though he was not of the royal family of Faas, many looked to him as heir-apparent to the sovereignty. He held in princely contempt all trades, professions, and callings, and thought it beneath the dignity of a "lord of creation" to follow them. When, therefore, he accompanied the tribes in their migrations from place to place, he did not, as was the habit of others, assume the occupation of either tinker, grinder,

bass-manufacturer, or the profession of a musician—but he went forth with his gun and his hound, or his leister and net, and every preserve, plantation, and river supplied him with food, and the barns of strangers with bread.

Judith was two years younger than Gemmel Græme, and he had not looked upon her lovely face with indifference; for the stronger passions and the gentler feelings of the soul find a habitation in the breast of the wandering gipsy as in those of other men. He had a bold manly bearing, and an expressive countenance. Judith, too, had seen much of his exploits. She had beheld him, to the neck in water, struggle with the strong salmon, raise it up, and cast it on the shore. She, too, had witnessed instances of his daring spirit, and in every sport had seen all vanquished who dared to contend with him. Yea, when the scented blossom, like fragrant fleece, overspread the hawthorn hedgerows, and the primrose and wild violet flowered at its roots—when the evening star shone glorious in the west, brightening through the deepening twilight—when the viewless cuckoo sighed "good-night" to its mate, and the landrail took up its evening cry—then have Judith and Gemmel sat together by the hedge-side, at a distance from the encampment, with her hand in his. Then he would tell her of the feats he had achieved, of the wrestling-matches he had won, or the leaps he had made, and, pressing her hand, add, "But what care I for what I do, or for what others say, when the bright een o' my bonny Judith werena there to reward me wi' a blink o' joy!"

"Ye're a flatterer, Gemmel," whispered she.

"No, bonniest," answered he; "I deny that; I am nae flatterer. But if I were, ye are far beyont flattery sic as mine; and it is nane to say, that to my een ye are bonnier than yon gowden star, that shines by its single sel' in the wide heavens—and to me ye are dearer than the mountain is to the wild deer, or the green leaves to the singing birds."

Then he would press his lips to hers, and she blushed, but

upbraided him not. But in the character of Judith, as in that of every woman over whose bosom vanity waveth its butterfly wings, there was something of the coquette. She did not at all times meet the affections of Gemmel with mutual tenderness, though she loved him beyond any one else, and was proud to see him wear her yoke. She had often smiled upon others, while her eyes glanced cold as illuminated ice upon him. Yet never was there one on whom she so smiled that repented not having courted or obtained it. For, as Gemmel's hand was strong and his love passionate, so was his jealousy keen and his revenge insatiate. There were cripples in the tribe, who owed their lameness to the hand of Gemmel, because, in some instance, Judith had shown a capricious preference to them while she slighted him.

Now, as has been said, it was a day of feasting and rejoicing amongst them, and Judith was Gemmel's partner in the dance. Walter, the young heir of Riccon, was riding round the Eildons, with his grey goshawk upon his arm, and his servant following him; and hearing sounds of music and shouts of revelry, he turned in the direction from whence they proceeded. He drew up his horse within a few yards of the merry group, and, from the first glance, the striking figure and the more striking features of Judith arrested his attention. His eyes followed her through the winding mazes of the dance. They sought to meet hers. Gemmel Græme observed him, and a scowl gathered on his brow. When the dance was ended, he led Judith to a green hillock on which her father sat, and approaching the heir of Riccon, inquired, fiercely, "What want ye, sir?—what look ye at?"

"Troth, friend," replied Walter, the master of Riccon, who was of too courageous a temperament to be awed by the face or frown of any man, "I look at yer bonny partner, and I want to speak to her, for a lovelier face or a gentler figure my een haena looked on since my mother bore me."

"Sir," retorted Gemmel, more fiercely, "ye hae yer grey goshawk, yer horses, and yer servant; I dinna covet them, and dinna ye covet what is mine, and to me mair precious. Awa' the road ye cam, or ony road ye like, but remain not here. Your company isna desired. Is it the manners o' you gentry to break in where ye are uninvited? Again, I warn ye, *while the earth is green*, to turn your horse's head away! I, Gemmel Græme, wha never vowed revenge but I satisfied it, warn ye!"

"As well," replied young Walter, haughtily, "might you vend your threats upon the rocks that compose those cloven mountains, as waste them upon me. I shall speak wi' your bonny partner;" and he struck his spurs into his horse to proceed towards her.

Gemmel grasped the bridle, and in a moment horse and rider were upon the ground.

"Gemmel Græme!" shouted Lussha Fleckie, "is that the welcome ye gie to strangers? Foul fa' ye! ye passionate tyke!—tak yer hands aff the gentleman, and if he wishes to join in oor merriment he's welcome. Gae, Judith, bring forward the gentle stranger."

Gemmel withdrew his hand from young Walter's throat; and, as he did so, he uttered wild and bitter words, and flung himself, as if in carelessness, on the ground, his head resting on his hand.

Judith, at her father's bidding, went and conducted the heir of Riccon to where her father sat and the late dancers were assembled, and Gemmel was left alone. A brief conversation passed between Lussha and Walter, during which the latter failed not to express his admiration of Judith. Her father smiled—there was a look of triumph in the eyes of her mother. The pipes again struck up, the dance was resumed, and Walter the heir of Riccon was the partner of Judith; while Gemmel Græme lay upon the ground, gazing upon them and gnashing his teeth.

"We maun see that nae harm come to the young Riccon oot o' this," whispered some of the eldest of the tribe to each other, who had not again joined in the dance, "for Gemmel is kicking his heel upon the ground, and whistlin' to himsel', and the horse-shoe is on his brow. It was wrong in Lussha to provoke him. There is an ill drink brewing for the young laird. He is dancing owre gunpoother where the touch-fire is creeping to it."

The dance was ended, and young Walter, taking a costly ring from his finger, placed it on Judith's, and whispered, "Wear it for my sake." And her cheeks seemed more lovely as she blushed, smiled, and accepted the gift.

Gemmel started to his feet as he beheld this. But Walter dashed his spurs into his horse, and, riding away, in a few minutes was out of sight. Gemmel glanced upbraidingly on Judith, and he passed by her parents in sullenness and in silence.

But the heir of Riccon had not ridden far, when he turned round and said to his servant, "We go now to Melrose, and from thence we shall go back and watch the movements o' the party we have seen. Mark ye weel the maiden wi' whom I danced, and whose marrow ye never saw; for rather would I that she was lady o' Riccon Ha', than that I shouldna meet her again."

Shortly after the departure of Walter, some of the tribe, perceiving that what had passed between him and Judith was likely to lead to a quarrel between Lussha Fleckie and Gemmel Græme, and knowing, from the nature of both, that such a quarrel would be deadly in its results, proposed that the festivities should terminate, and the encampment break up. The proposal was carried by a majority of voices; and even Lussha, though conscious of the reason why it was made, knew so well the fiery and desperate nature of him who was regarded by the tribe as the future husband of his daughter, that he brooked his own temper, and agreed to it.

And, while they began to move their tents, and to load their asses and their ponies, Gemmel stood, whistling moodily, leaning against a tree, his eyes ever and anon directed with an inquisitive scowl towards the tent of Judith's father, his arms folded on his breast, and at intervals stamping his foot upon the ground; while his favourite hound looked in his face, howled, and shook its tail impatiently, as though it knew that there was work for it at hand.

Early on the following day, the servant of the heir of Riccon returned, and brought him tidings that the encampment had broken up, and Judith and her father had erected their tent in the neighbourhood of Kelso; for, as the ballad upon the subject hath it,

> 'Often by Tweed they saunter'd down
> As far as pleasant Kelso town."

Walter mounted his horse, and arrived within sight of their tent before the sun had gone down. At a distance from it he perceived Judith. She was alone, and holding her hand towards the declining sun, gazing upon her fingers as if admiring the ring he had presented to her on the previous day. He rode to where she stood. She seemed so entranced that she perceived not his approach. She was indeed admiring the ring. Yet let not her sex blame her too harshly: men and women have all their foibles—this was one of Judith's; and she was a beautiful but ignorant girl of eighteen, whose mind had never been nurtured, and whose heart had been left to itself, to be swayed by every passion. He dismounted—he threw himself on his knees before her—he grasped her hand. "Loveliest of women!" he began —— But I will not follow him through his rhapsody. Such speeches can be spoken but at one period of our lives, and they are interesting only to those to whom they are addressed: therefore I will spare my readers its recital. But it made an impression on the heart of Judith. He spoke not of *his* feats of strength, of his running, leaping, and wrestling, as

Gemmel did; but he spoke of *her*, and in strains new but pleasant to her ear. And, although she had chided her first lover as a flatterer, she did not so chide the heir of Riccon. Vanity kindled at his words, and even while he knelt and spoke before her, she forgot Gemmel, and already fancied herself the jewelled lady of Riccon Hall.

He perceived the effect which his first gift had produced, and he saw also how earnestly she listened to his words. He wore a golden repeater, which he had purchased in Geneva, and which was secured by a chain of the same metal, that went round his neck. He placed the chain around her neck, he pressed the watch upon her bosom. In her bosom she heard, she felt it beat, while her own heart beat more rapidly.

"Hark!—hark!" said he, "how constantly it beats upon your breast—yet, trust me, loved one, my heart beats more truly for you."

Before they parted, another assignation was arranged. From that period, frequent interviews took place between Walter and the lovely Judith, and at each visit he brought her presents, and adorned her person with ornaments. Her parents knew of his addresses, but they forbade them not.

Now, one evening they had taken up their abode in a deserted building near to Twisel Bridge; and thither the young laird came to visit Judith. Her father invited him into what had once been an apartment in the ruined building, and requested him to sup with them. Walter consented; for the love he bore to Judith could render the coarsest morsel sweet. But, when he beheld the meat that was to be prepared and placed before him, his heart sickened and revolted, for it consisted of part of a sheep that had died; and, when Lussha beheld this, he said, "Wherefore shudder ye, young man, and why is your heart sick? Think ye not that the flesh o' the brute which has been slain by the hand o' its Creator, is

fitter for man to eat than the flesh o' an animal which man has butchered?"*

Walter had not time to reply; for, as Lussha finished speaking, a dog bounded into the ruins amongst them. Judith started from the ground; she raised her hands, her eyes flashed with horror.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, in a voice of suppressed agony, "it is Gemmel's—Gemmel's hound! Fly, Walter, fly!"

"Wherefore should I fly?" returned the youth; "think ye, Judith, I am not able to defend myself and you against any man? Let this fierce braggart come."

"Away!—haste ye away, sir!" said Lussha, earnestly, grasping him by the arm, "or there will be blood and dead bodies on this floor! Come away! Gemmel Græme is at hand, and ye dinna ken him sae weel as I do!"

Walter would have remonstrated, but the gipsy, still grasping him by the arm, dragged him to a door of the ruin, adding, "Steal away—quick! quick among the trees, and keep down by the Till to Tweedside. Dinna speak!—away!"

It was a grey midnight in July, and the heir of Riccon had not been absent three minutes, when Gemmel Græme stalked into the ruin, and with his arms folded sat down upon a stone in sullen silence.

"We are glad to see ye, Gemmel," said Mariam; "ye hae been an unco stranger."

"Humph!" was his brief and cold reply.

The supper was spread upon the ground, and the mother of Judith again added, "Come, Gemmel, lad, it is o' nae use to be in a cankered humour for ever. Draw forward and help yersel'—ye see there is nae want."

"So I see!" replied he, sarcastically; "did ye expect company? I doubt yer fare would hardly be to *his* palate!"

* Gipsies always assign this as a reason for their preferring the flesh of animals that have died to that of such as are slaughtered.—Ed.

"What do you mean, Gemmel?" cried Lussha; "think ye that we are to put up wi' yer fits?—or wherefore, if ye hae naething to say, come ye glunching here, wi' a brow as dark and threatening as a nicht in December?"

Gemmel rose angrily, and replied, "I hae something to say, Lussha, and that something is to Judith, but not in your presence. Judith, will ye speak wi' me?" added he, addressing her.

Judith, who had sat in a corner of the ruin, with her hands upon her bosom, covering the watch which young Walter had given her, and forgetting that the golden chain by which it was suspended from her neck was visible, cast a timid glance towards her father, as if imploring his protection.

"I am no sure, Gemmel," said Lussha, "whether I can trust my daughter in your company or no. If I do, will ye gie me yer thumb that ye winna harm her, nor raise your hand against her."

"Harm her!" exclaimed Gemmel, disdainfully: "I scorn it!—there's my thumb."

"Ye may gang, Judith," said her father.

Judith, with fear and guilt graven on her lovely features, rose and accompanied Gemmel. He walked in silence by her side until they came to an old and broad-branched tree, which stood about forty yards from the ruin. A waning summer moon had risen since he arrived, and mingled its light with the grey gloam of the night, revealing the ornaments which Judith wore.

"Judith," said Gemmel, breaking the silence, and raising her hand from her bosom, with which she concealed the watch, "where got ye thae braw ornaments? Has yer faither found a heart to lay his fingers on the treasures in the silver jug?"

She trembled, and remained silent.

"Poor thing! poor thing!—lost Judith!" exclaimed Gemmel. "I see how it is. For the sake o' thae vile gew-

gaws, ye hae deserted me—ye hae sacrificed peace o' mind, and bidden fareweel to happiness! O Judith, woman!—wha is the flatterer noo? Do you mind syne we sat by the hedge-side thegither, when the corn-craik counted the moments round about us, and tried to mind us hoo they flew—when the sun had sunk down in the west, and the bonny hawthorn showered its fragrance owre us, as though we sat in the garden where our first parents were happy? Do you mind o' thae days, Judith?—and hoo, when my heaving bosom beat upon yours, as we sat locked in ilka other's arms, I asked, 'Will ye be mine?' and ye let yer head fa' on my shouther, and said, '*I will!*'—Judith! do ye mind o' thae things, and where are they noo?"

"Gemmel Græme," replied she, and she wept as she spoke, "let me gang—I canna bide wi' ye—and ye hae nae richt to put yer questions to me."

"Nae richt!" he returned. "O Judith! hae ye forgotten a' yer vows?—or hae ye forgotten the time when, in caulder nichts than this, when the snaw was on the ground, and the trees were bare o' leaves, that ye hae stood or wandered wi' me, frae the time that the sun gaed down, until the sea-birds and the craws sailed owre our heads seeking for their food on the next morning?—and now ye tell me ye canna bide wi' me! O Judith! ye hae dune what has made my heart miserable, and what will mak yer ain as miserable?" And as he spoke he still held her hand.

"Let me gang, Gemmel," she again sobbed, and struggled to wrest her hand from his grasp—"I hae naething to say to ye."

"Then ye will leave me, Judith!" he cried, wildly—"leave me for ever, wi' a withered heart and a maddened brain!" She answered him not, but still wept and struggled the more to escape from him.

"Then gang, Judith!" he cried, and flung her hand from him, "but beware hoo we meet again!"

Some months after this, and when the harvest-moon shone full on the fields of golden grain, and the leaves rustled dry and embrowned upon the trees, there was a sound of voices in a wood which overhung the Tweed near Coldstream. They were the voices of Walter the heir of Riccon and of Judith.

"Leave," said he, "dear Judith, leave this wandering life, and come wi' me, and ye shall be clad in silks, dearest, hae servants to wait on ye, and a carriage to ride in!"

"Ah!" she sighed, "but a wandering life is a pleasant life; and, if I were to gang wi' ye, would ye aye be kind to me, and love me as you do now?"

"Can ye be sae cruel as doubt me, Judith?" was his reply.

"Weel," returned she, "it was for yer sake that I left Gemmel Græme, wha is a bald and a leal lad, and one that I once thought I liked weel. Now, I dinna understand about your priests and your books, but will ye come before my faither and my mother, and the rest o' oor folk, and before them swear that I am yer lawfu' wife, the only lady o' Riccon Ha', and I will gang wi' ye?"

"My own Judith, I will!" replied Walter, earnestly.

"You will not!" exclaimed a loud and wild voice, "unless over the dead body of Gemmel Græme!"

At the same moment a pistol flashed within a few yards of where they stood, and Walter the heir of Riccon fell with a groan at the feet of Judith. Her screams rang through the woods, startling the slumbering birds from the branches, and causing them to fly to and fro in confusion. Gemmel sprang forward, and grasped her hand. "Now, fause ane," he cried, "kiss the lips o' yer bonny bridegroom!—catch his spirit as it leaves him! Hang roond his neck and haud him to yer heart till his corpse be cauld! Noo, he canna hae ye, and I winna! Fareweel!—fareweel!—fause, treacherous Judith!"

Thus saying, and striking his forehead, and uttering a loud and bitter scream, he rushed away.

Judith sank down by the dead body of Walter, and her tears fell upon his face. Her cries reached the encampment, where her parents and others of her race were. They hastened to the wood from whence her cries proceeded, and found her stretched upon the ground, her arms encircling the neck of the dead. They raised her in their arms, and tried to soothe her, but she screamed the more wildly, and seemed as one whose senses grief has bewildered.

"Judith," said her father, "speak to me, bairn—wha has done this? Was it ——"

"Gemmel!—wicked Gemmel!" she cried; and in the same breath added, "No! no!—it wasna him! It was me! —it was me! It was fause Judith."

Gemmel Græme, however, had dropped his pistol on the ground when he beheld his victim fall, and one of the party taking it up, they knew him to be the murderer. Lussha Fleckie, touched by his daughter's grief, and disappointed by his dream of vain ambition being broken, caused each of his party to take a vow that they would search for Gemmel Græme, and whosoever found him should take blood for blood upon his head.

And they did search, but vainly, for Gemmel was no more heard of.

Twelve months passed, and autumn had come again. A young maniac mother, with a child at her breast, and dressed as a gipsy, endeavoured to cross the Tweed between Norham and Ladykirk. The waters rose suddenly, and as they rose she held her infant closer to her bosom, and sang to it; but the angry flood bore away the maniac mother and her babe. She was rescued and restored to life, though not to reason, but the child was seen no more.

For thirty years the poor maniac continued at intervals to visit the fatal spot, wandering by the river, stretching out

her arms, calling on her child, saying, "Come to me—come to yer mother, my bonny bairn, for ye are heir o' Riccon, and why should I gang shoeless amang snaw! Come to me—it was cruel Gemmel Græme that murdered yer bonny faither—it wasna me!"

It was in January the body of a grey-haired woman, covered with a tattered red cloak, was found frozen and dead, below Norham Castle. It was the poor maniac Judith, the once beautiful gipsy. Some years afterwards, an old soldier, who had been in foreign wars, came to reside in the neighbourhood, and on his death-bed requested that he should be buried by the side of Judith, and the letters G. G. carved on a stone over his grave.

THE DROICH.

On the evening of that eventful day which saw Patrick Hamilton, Abbot of Ferne, the young and learned Scotch proto-martyr to the Protestant faith, bend his head and resign his soul at the burning stake, in the head-quarters of Scottish superstition—St Andrews—a young man was slowly bending his steps from the scene of execution towards his home, a good many miles distant. The effect produced by that day's proceedings was, as is well known, felt throughout all Scotland, where the scene of martyrdom was, as yet, one of these *mirâ nova* which startle a country, and extort from the innermost recesses of the heart thoughts and feelings as new as intense. In the case of Hamilton, there were many features calculated, in an eminent degree, to strike deep into the minds of a sympathetic and meditative people; and doubtless, his birth, descended from the royal house of Albany—his learning, derived from the deep wells of Mair's philosophy—and his extreme youth—were not the least impressive; yet there was something in the mere *manner* of his death—abstracted even from the species of immolation not altogether new to Scotland, cruelly mangled, as he was, by an awkward or cold-blooded executioner – that deepened and riveted the effect produced by the extraordinary scene of his martyrdom. If casual or merely curious spectators might dream of that scene till their dying hour, we may form some estimate of what the friend and college companion of the martyr—for such was the young man whom we have now introduced to the reader—felt and thought, as, with eyes bent on the ground, he prosecuted his journey homewards, after witnessing the execu-

tion. Imbued himself with the spirit of the new faith, he had that day seen it proved, in a manner little less than miraculous. One of the softest and gentlest of mankind, who would have shrunk from the sight of pain inflicted on the meanest of God's creatures, had been enabled, by celestial influence, to stand, in the midst of a scorching and destroying fire, undaunted, unmoved, with smiles on his countenance, and words of exhortation on his lips. The feelings of the religionist were roused and sublimed by the contemplation of one of heaven's marvels; but the pity of the man and the friend was not lost in the admiration of the heaven-born fortitude that simulated total relief from bodily agony. Tears filled the eyes of the youth, and were wiped away only to rise again with the recurring thoughts of the various stages of the trial and triumph of his beloved friend. He had already wandered a considerable distance; but the space bore no proportion to the time occupied; for he had sat down often by the roadside, hid his face in his hands, and been lost in a species of charmed contemplation of images at which he shuddered.

While yet some miles from the end of his journey, the shades of night began to fall over the undulating heights that form the end of the Ochil chain to the west; but, as yet, the sun, the only object seen in the whole horizon, appeared in full disk, red and lurid, like the mass of ember-faggots which, some hours before, lay in the street of St Andrews, surmounted by the blackened corpse of the martyr. The traveller turned his eye in the direction of the luminary; but quickly passed his hand over his brow, from an instinctive feeling of horror, as a dim wreath of cloud, stretching along the superior part of the fiery circle, seemed to realise again, in solemn magnificence, the sight he had witnessed. The altitude of the object which suggested the resemblance, with the gorgeousness in which it

was arrayed, again claimed the aspiring thought, that the spirit of his friend, sublimed by the doctrines of the new faith, was even then journeying to the spheres which he contemplated. The final triumph of the martyr was completed in the scene of his agonies; and the seal of eternal truth was, by God's finger, imprinted on the doctrines he had published and explained in the midst of the melting fire of the furnace. Placing his hand in his breast, he drew forth the beautiful Latin treatise which his friend had composed on the subject of the justification of the sinner, through a believing faith in Him who was foretold from the beginning of time; and, sitting again down by the side of a hedge, he struggled, in the descending twilight, to store his mind with some of those precepts which were destined to claim the reverence of an enlightened world. He was soon lost in the rapt meditation in which the spirits of the early reformers rejoiced amidst the persecution with which they were surrounded, and was again in regions brighter than those of this world, in communion with him who, when the flames were already crackling among the faggots, cried out, "Behold the way to everlasting life!" From the exalted sphere of his dreamy cogitations he looked down with a contempt which, as his head reclined among the grass, might have been observed curling the lip of indignant scorn, upon all the thousand corruptions of the Old Church—its sold indulgences, its certified beatifications, its pardons, its soul-redeeming masses, its chanting music, its sins, and its ineffectual mortifications. The bright spirit of Christianity, arrayed in her pure garment of white, was before the view of his fancy; her clear seraphic eye beamed through his soul: and, with finger pointed to heaven, she invited him to brave the pile and the persecution of men, and gain the crown which was now encircling the temples of Hamilton. He thought he could then have died as his friend had perished, and that the pangs of the circling flames would have been felt by him merely as the smart pungency of a healing medi-

cament, which the patient rejoices in as the means of acquiring health.

How long he remained under the influence of this beatific vision he knew not himself. He had fallen asleep. He opened his eyes: the sun had now gone down into the western main; and all that was left of his glory was a thin stream of wavy light, which, shooting across the dark firmament, looked like the wake of the passing spirit of his friend on its journey to heaven. He arose. The searching dews of evening had penetrated to his skin; a cold shiver shot through his frame; and again, clutched by the humbling and levelling harpies of worldly feelings, fears, and experiences, he felt all the terror of his former sensations when he beheld the corpse of the martyr sink with a crash among the embers, which, as they received the body, sent forth a cloud of hissing, crackling sparkles of fire, mixed with a dense cloud of smoke.

"Alas! this spirit of mine is strong only in dreams," he muttered to himself, as the shiver of the night air passed over him. "It is as the eagle of Benclough, which, with his eye in the sun and his feet under his tail-plumes, will resist the storms that shiver the pines of the Ochils; yet bring him to earth, and draw one feather from his wing, and he can only raise a streperous noise amidst the sweltering suffocation of his earth-crib."

He had scarcely uttered the words, when he saw the short, thick figure of a man coming along the road, enveloped in a gown, and bearing a stick like a thraw-crook in his hand. Starting to his feet, he stood, for a moment, to see if he could recognise the individual.

"Good even to ye, young Master o' Riddlestain," said the individual, as he came up, and was recognised by the youth —"good even to ye; and God send ye a warmer bed than the hedge-beild, and a caulder than ane o' bleezing faggots."

"Good even, Carey," replied the youth. "I return your salutation. The one lair, as a beadsman of Pittenweem, you may have experienced ere now; the other you stand in small fears of. From St Andrews, if I can judge from your allusion to the sad doings of to-day in that part?"

"Ye guess right," replied the beadsman, as they proceeded forward, side by side; "but how could you guess wrang, when every outlyer and rinner-about in the East Neuk has been this day at the head-quarters o' prelacy. A strange day and a selcouth sight for auld een. It's no often that Carey Haggerston carries a fu' ee and a fu' wallet."

"Then you were moved by the fate of poor Hamilton, Carey?" replied the youth.

"And wha, Papist or heretic, could stand yon sight wi' dry een?" replied the man, in a voice that trembled in the sinews of his throat. "I wad hae gien a' the bodles the prelates threw me—the mair by token, I think, that the puir callant was writhing in the fire-flaughts o' their anger—for ae stroke wi' this kevel at the head o' yon culroun caitiff o' an executioner. The bonny youth was roasted as if he'd been a capon for the table o' the cardinal, only there was mair smoke than might hae suited his lordship's palate, I reckon."

"You have got a good awmous, Carey, will sleep sound, and think nothing of it on the morrow?" said the youth.

"Anster Fair was naething to it," replied the beadsman. "The scene seemed to open the hearts o' prelates and priors, that never gave a plack to a bluegown before. I held up the corner o' my gown beneath the chapel o' the cardinal, and, sure enough, there were mair groats than tears fell into it. Ah, sir, though my wallet was yape, my heart was youden. But we're near the haugh road to Riddlestain, Master Henry, and, as the night is loun and light, I carena though I step up past the Quarryheugh wi' ye."

"You may expect small alms from the Droich," said Henry.

"No muckle, I daresay," replied the bluegown; "but I stand in nae fear o' him, and that's mair than the bauldest heart o' the East Neuk can say. I wad stroke the lang hair o' the creature any day for an awmous, unearthly as he is."

"Know you aught of this extraordinary being, Carey?" said the youth, as they turned up the haugh loan.

"Ye're no the first nor the hundredth that has put that question to the beadsman," replied the other, as he looked up with a side-glance in the face of the questioner. "Everybody thinks I should ken auld Mansie o' the Quarryheugh—the mair by token, I fancy, that naebody on earth kens mair o' him than just that he is a hurklin, gnarled carle, wha cam to the Quarryheugh some months syne, and biggit, wi' his ain hands, a beild which has mair banes than stanes in its bouk."

"I know more of him myself than that, Carey," said the young man.

"What ken ye?" rejoined the other, with a laugh.

Henry's silence was probably meant as a quickener of the beadsman's garrulity.

"Ye may ken, maybe," said the other, "that he speels the sides o' the Quarryheugh—that is, whar there are trees to haud by—like a squirrel, swinging frae ae ryss to anither, and sometimes dangling over the deep pool aneath him, like a showman's signboard, or a gammon frae the kitchen ciel o' the Priory o' Pittenweem; but the creature's legs are nae bigger than an urchin's, while his trunk and arms are like the knur and branches of an oak. What ken ye mair o' him? What kens ony ane mair o' him, an it bena that he has been seen, in the moonlight, howking the banes o' the dead Melvilles o' Falconcleugh frae the side o' the quarry, whar it marches wi' the howf o' the auld house that stands by the brink? An auld wife's tale, doubtless, though maybe he needed the banes for his biggin."

"I believe the people in these parts would know more of him, were they not afraid to go near him," said the youth. "They stand peeping over the quarry brink at him, as if he were the 'gudeman of the croft,' Mahoun himself."

"And nae ferly either, Henry," said Carey; "for his face speaks as clearly o' the skaith o' fire as did that o' Patrick Hamilton when yon gust o' wind drove the flames to the east, and showed his cheeks—sae pale, alace! and like a delicate leddy's, as they ance were—burnt as brown as the wa's o' Falconcleugh House there."

The two speakers had now arrived at the old mansion of the Melvilles, which stood on the brink of the deep crater, whose high sides had procured for it the appellation of the Quarryheugh. At the side or end next the chasm, rose, beetling over it, a high turret, perforated in several storeys by small embrasures, and surrounded by three tiers of bartisans. From this flanking strength, the two side walls—relieved, at intervals, by circular projections containing spiral stairs—ran back, and were terminated by an ordinary gable, the inclined sides of which were cut in gradually-receding steps. The care which seemed to have been taken in securing the casements by closed shutters within, indicated, more certainly than did the general appearance of the withered house, that, though unoccupied, it was still deemed suitable for serving the uses of a dwelling, and that the choughs and stannyels that perched on its roofs were mere tenants at will, and might be removed on a day's warning. For a considerable distance around, there was nothing to be seen but a bare heath, the dark brown aspect of which suggested the probability of its having been swept by the destroying flames of muirburn. Even the few straggling boulders that shot up their grey heads through the scanty gorse stems, springing from their bases, wore a black, scathed appearance, as if they had still retained the traces of the ravage of the sweeping scourge. Hidden, except to near gazers

amidst this wild waste, and shelving down from the tower of the mansion, the chasm or quarry, in the form of a huge crater, lay deep and still, with a dark mass of greenish-hued water reposing like another Dead Sea in its bosom. Around two sides of it, where there was a sufficiency of soil to support them, grew a number of stunted pines, the heads of none of which appeared above the superior circle; but, dipping down, added to the darkness of the water beneath, by the shadows they flung over its surface. At the eastern part, and where the pines in that direction ended, there seemed to have fallen down a large portion of the superincumbent bank, whereby there was formed a species of island, whose nearer edge might be about ten feet from the bank from which it had been severed.

On this insular spot, which was now accessible from the mainland by means of two pine trunks thrown across and wattled together, lived the extraordinary individual whose form and habits had, in the conversation of the two speakers, been, in a partial manner, described. The small domicile he had reared for himself was entirely composed of materials supplied by the chasm in which it was situated, and constructed in the rudest manner of a self-taught artist, whose object was to shield himself from the inclemency of the weather, without any view to comforts, which he either despised, or deemed it unsafe or improper to indulge. It was, indeed, a mere rough shieling, with four walls, composed of rubble stones, mixed with—what probably excited more wonder than all the other supernatural attributes of the place, and the being himself—a due proportion of bones, collected from the cemetery of the family of Falconcleugh House, which had, on some disruption of the sides of the chasm, been laid open on its western side. The roof was supported by one or two rough trunks of pines, thrown in a slanting direction across, and composed of small twigs and leaves, wattled and compressed in such a manner as to

save the inmate from a part, at least, of heaven's more profuse inundations.

The bare and scorched wilderness around, over which the eyes of the beadsman and his companion were wandering, as they approached the scene of their conversation, had now resigned its embrowned hue, for the not less dreary and mystic tinge of the blue light of the young moon, as she struggled with the falling darkness. The circumstances of the still unseen chasm being tenanted by the only living mortal within the circumference of the bleak waste, and he himself, calculated, by his unusual formation of body, and imputed mystic powers and attributes, to aid the pregnant associations connected with his lonely condition, was, by those acquainted with the locality of Falconcleugh Muir, naturally combined with the dismal celebrity of the place for these deeds of violence so common at that period in Scotland. Whatever may have been felt by his less imaginative companion, whose familiarity with the overt proceedings of the occult powers of the waste and the ruin may have blunted his perceptions of the supernatural, it is at least certain, and assuredly no marvel either, that Henry Leslie surveyed the scene around him with the feelings natural to the time and the country when and where he lived. The dark figure of the house rose before him, claiming the homage due to the genius of the place, where it was almost the only object that arrested the eye. Replete in itself with the elements of gloomy associations, connected with the fate of the once happy Melvilles who resided there, it threw a wizard power over the surrounding heath-waste, investing the bleak inanity of Nature's most negative condition with an interest which could not have been possessed by her multiform productions. The absence of material objects of thought lent even a species of positive character of inspissated essence to the blue haze of the atmosphere, which seemed to hang like a mighty sea in the deepest stillness of

nature's silence. For some time, neither of the parties had uttered a word. The brush of their feet on the heath, and the sound of their breath, were intensified by the silence into noises that to the younger of the two seemed startling and painful.

"Hooly, hooly," muttered the beadsman, as his last step brought him to the chasm; "loun and canny, young master—loun and lightly," he added, as he sat down on what seemed to have been a step of a ruined porch, close by the building, and by the brink of the shelving heugh. "Eh! but this silence is gousty and eiric. That corbie's grane was like the roar of a lion. Didna ye think the drum o' yer ear would crack wi' the sound?"

Henry seated himself by the bluegown on the stone, and they both turned their eyes down on the deep hollow, where the waters seemed as dark as the Stygian stream.

"I hear nae stir in the howe," said the beadsman, "and see naething but that rickle o' a house standing on that eerie pinnacle, like a craw's nest on the tap o' a tree in a glen. The creature's surely sleeping after his day's wark; for he works like a dergar, and nae man kens what at. He maks neither wicker corbins nor quhorls, like the rest o' his Droich species."

"Hist! Carey; heard ye not a noise?" said the youth.

"A hungry stane hawk spooming down the quarry after some raven that has been picking the banes o' the Melvilles," replied the other. "Wear-awins! there's a sad change on Falconcleugh now," he continued, as he turned his face to the walls. "The fire o' the ha' has been eighteen years extinguished; and when it may be lighted again, it will be to warm fremmet blude o' the spoiler o' the auld family. Heard ye that Gilbert Blackburn o' Kingsbarns, the commendator o' Pittenweem, is shortly to tak up his residence here, whar, methinks, he has as little right as the puir beadsman."

"No," replied Henry, as, keeping his eye on the house of the strange inhabitant, he lent his ear to the gaberlunzie man.

"It is even so," continued the old man. "It is now eighteen years, come the time, since George Melville, the last o' his ancient race, was burned for a heretic in Bordeaux. He was driven frae that mansion there, and the braw lands o' Falconcleugh, by Gilbert Blackburn, the persecutor o' the heretics, even he wha had a hand in raising the black stake at the cross o' St Andrews the day. I saw his ee, red as the burning faggots, fixed on the puir youth. I'm thinking I didna thank him for his awmous."

"You seem friendly to the heretics, Carey, yet live by the kirk," said the youth, withdrawing his eye from the chasm.

"The kirk's penny has as mony placks in't as a heretic's—the mair by token, they hae baith three," replied Carey. "I hae my ain thoughts o' the auld faith and the new doctrines; but it's better to live by the altar than be burned on't."

"It might have been well for the earthly part of Patrick Hamilton, had he observed your worldly wisdom," said Henry.

"Ay; but his soul wadna hae been in yon blue lift the night," replied Carey, looking up to the sky. "Na, na, nor might that o' puir Falconcleugh have been there afore him, if he had bowed his head at the auld altar. Yet *he* tried to save his body by fleeing to France—vain flight, for his persecutor, Kingsbarns, wrote incontinent to the authorities at Bordeaux, to watch him as an enemy to the holy kirk. Then cam the sough, as pleasant to the ears o' Kingsbarns as the whistlin' winds to the outlaying bluegowns, that his victim was burned. His bonny wife, ane o' the Blebos, wha fled wi' him, died o' a broken heart; and now, they say, the race is dune. Whist! whist! Gude and the

rude! What's the creature doing amang the trees o' the howe at this time o' nicht?"

A rustling noise arrested the ears of the speakers, and Henry's eye was turned in the direction of the sound. The short stunted figure of a man was dimly seen down among the pines, working his way along the face of the precipice, by means of his arms alone, swinging from one stem to another, and occasionally resting for a moment, by remaining suspended, in an apparently dangerous and fearful, yet perfectly composed manner, over the water in the deep basin of the crater. Continuing this operation, in which there was clearly exercised an extraordinary brachial power and energy, he approached, with marvellous rapidity, his dwelling; and, by one or two more salient movements, in which there could not be observed, any more than in his prior progress, the slightest use made of his inferior extremities, he came to the wattled trunks lying across the cleft. Seizing these with the same extraordinary power of grasp, he hung for a few seconds in mid-air, suspended by the hands; then, by two or three successive throws and jerks, which made the pines bend and creak, he reached the insular height whereon his hovel was erected, and drawing himself up, he sat down, apparently in a resting attitude, upon the brink of the riven bank. In this position he remained for a considerable time, with his head bent downwards, as if he were wrapped in deep meditation. The rough croaking of some crows that had been disturbed by the rustling movements he had made among the pines ceased, and, in the hushed silence that again reigned over the bleak waste, there might have been heard his deep inspirations, as he drew breath after his exertions. Turning round, and applying himself again to his hands, he began to move along on the narrow space between the walls of his house and the edge of the height, making his arms the principal instruments of his progress, and using his short in-

ferior extremities as subserving agents. The motion thus produced seemed to be a compromising medium between the crawl and the spasmodic jump of a wounded quadruped; yet he made rapid progress; went round the small dwelling, and was seen again at the other side in an attitude which showed, that, however ineffectual his lower limbs might be in the operation of ambulation, they could yet support his broad, thick-set trunk. Standing erect, he exhibited an elevation of about four feet and a-half, a stature which—in an individual of corresponding dimensions in other members—might not have been sufficient to entitle him to enter the pale of the "Droichs;" but, when viewed in relation to the almost gigantic breadth of his chest and shoulders, the troll-like size of his head, and the extreme length of his arms, could not fail, when seen through the medium of the moonlight, and in the locality of a blasted heath-waste, to suggest a relationship to some of the stout "elfin" of Scandinavian fable.

The two spectators felt all the charm of the feelings of the supernatural in watching the motions of the eremite; and, probably—in so far, at least, as regarded the younger of the two—the interest was deepened by their total inability to understand his motions, as, having looked steadfastly for a few minutes down into the chasm, he again betook himself to his quadrupedal amble; entered his hut, and emerged with something in the form of a large volume—the brass clasps of which glittered in the moonlight—bound to his waist. The small space between the door and the end of the wattled trunks he cleared by a series of short, rapid, bounding strides, without the aid of his arms; and throwing his body again on the ground, he remained in that position for a few minutes, after which he again seized the end of the trunks, swung himself along them, and entered among the trees. The dark figure of his body was now indistinctly seen moving, by the same yerking, propulsive throws, from tree

to tree, by which he had cleared the space before; and, getting beneath the shadow of the mansion, he disappeared from the view of the spectators, at the same time that the cracking of a branch, amid the sound of a splash in the water, came upon their ears. They neither heard nor saw more of him. The deepest silence reigned everywhere; and the dreary scene seemed as if in an instant deprived of every trace of living sound or motion, save the deep-drawn breath and palpitating throbs of the heart of the younger of the two observers. Overcome with the pressure of awe, he sat bound to his stone-seat, and turned his eye on the face of the beadsman, where he found an expression very different from what he expected.

"Is the creature not down in that dreadful basin of pitchy waters?" muttered he.

"And if he were," replied Carey, as he twinkled his grey eye, unmoved, in the face of the youth, "what would ye do, young Master o' Riddlestain? Seek him, as the baron did his brood-sow in the well, on the top o' the towering Bech, and maybe find mair than ye want—a farrow o' young water elfs? Na, na! let him alane—he'll no drown. He's maybe even now kissing some water queen in the bottom o' the loch."

The youth looked inquiringly in the face of the bluegown; but the same expression was still there. He was sorely puzzled: the feelings of humanity were throbbing in his heart in audible pulses. The old beggar was in one of his humours, and held him by the skirt of his coat as he attempted to rise, while at the very moment, as he imagined, a human being was perishing in the waters. He sat breathless, with his ear chained to the abyss, and his eye searching in vain for some traces of meaning in the face of his arch companion. The same hushed stillness pervaded the scene of dreary desolation; neither the sound of a death-struggle nor of living motion could be distinguished, and it

was as difficult to account for an individual endowed with life and the desire of self-preservation drowning without a sigh or groan, as it was for the sudden disappearance of every trace of a still living being in the dismal abyss into which he had so mysteriously descended.

"It's a' owra now, at ony rate, Master Henry!" said the bluegown, adding to the youth's perplexity by a hint so directly opposed to his prior confidence: "the deil mair o' a sound comes frae earth, water, or air, than that croak o' a raven that even now flew o'er the quarry loch. We'll e'en be seeking hame, I think. I hae back to the road to Pittenweem to gae, and ye've a mile a-gate between ye and Riddlestain. Gude e'en to ye!"

And, without even troubling himself to look over the quarry brink, the beadsman began his ordinary half-trotting pace; and in a short time Henry saw him, in the distance, making rapid progress over the heath. Meanwhile he was himself at a loss what to think or what to do. The strange manner of the beadsman led him at one time to suppose that he was satisfied that no misfortune had occurred to the inhabitant of the quarry; and at another, his parting words, joined to the inexplicable disappearance of the extraordinary individual, inclined him to an opposite belief, and filled him with painful feelings of self-crimination for not having rendered a timely assistance in behalf of a fellow-creature. He could not yet move himself from the spot. Placing himself on his breast, he looked over the brink of the chasm, gazing through between the trees on the deep, sullen pool, which, like a sleeping monster, satiated with prey, lay as still as death. His ears were not less occupied: for a space, not less than half-an-hour, he lay in this position, without seeing or hearing the slightest indication of anything that might solve the mystery. He was enveloped in the gloom of his own personal experiences of the day. The thoughts of the calcinated corpse of Hamilton, and the

speaking spirit of the wild place where he lay, all combined with the painful feelings of the inquiry in which he was engaged to render his mind susceptible of morbid influences, and fecundative of supernatural creations of awe. He resolved frequently to rise suddenly to escape from the depressing yet charmed influence of the place, and the inexplicable circumstances connected with it, and re-solved, on the following moment, to endure still the creeping sensations of fear that run over him, in the hope of getting the mystery cleared up. His watch, however, still proved ineffectual. More time passed, but the silence continued unbroken by any sound, save, occasionally, the flap of a night-bird's wing, as it floated past, or the dying scream of a victim, awakened to die in the talons of the hawk. Rising, at length, he cast another look over the chasm, and bent his steps to Riddlestain.

When he reached home, he found his parents waiting impatiently for him.

"It is all over," said he, as he sat down, and covered his face with his hands. "The martyr has received his crown. God have mercy on us who are of the new faith!"

"And we are in danger from the commendator Blackburn," replied old Riddlestain. "He has taken the lands of Falconcleugh; and he will not be contented till he get Riddlestain also. Where is the martyr's treatise on the saving efficacy of faith? You took it with you to day to St. Andrews."

"Here, here," replied Henry, as he searched his bosom for the brochure. "No, no—it is gone!" he continued, as he rose and looked wildly around him. "I was reading it by the wayside; and, overcome with fatigue and suffering, I reclined, and slept—and now I find the book is gone. What may come of this, when our enemies are ranging the land with the fiery faggot?"

"Saw you no one by the way?" said the father.

"Only Carey, the wandering beadsman of Pittenweem," replied the son.

"Seek him—seek him, ere you sleep, Henry! Our lives depend on your recovering that book, which they call heretical, because it shows us the true way to that place where priests have no power. But the way it leads is through earthly flames, and we are not yet so well prepared for that ordeal as he who passed to-day."

The young man flew out of the house, and taking his way again past Falconcleugh, without stopping to know more certainly the fate of the inhabitant of the quarry, he was hurrying on in the direction which he supposed had been taken by the bluegown, when he heard a noise, as if of the opening of a door of the old mansion. The sound startled him, and he returned and placed himself in the shade of the walls. In a few minutes, he saw the old beadsman, who he thought had betaken himself to his quarters at Pittenweem, come forth, in the company of a young woman rolled up in a cloak. They hurried onwards as if afraid of discovery; and Henry, following them, traced them to the small cottage of Mossfell, about a half-a-mile distant from Falconcleugh. "My own Margaret again at Falconcleugh at a late hour." muttered the youth to himself, as he saw the young woman part with the bluegown, and betake herself to the cottage, while Carey proceeded on his way to Pittenweem. The youth allowed him to continue his course until he came to the spot where he had been reading the book. He then made up to him.

"Thus far only on your way, Carey?" said he, as he overtook him.

"Nae farther, Master Henry," was the reply, accompanied by a scrutinising twinkle of the beadsman's eye, as if to ascertain whether the questioner had noticed his proceedings. "But what has brought you again frae Riddlestain, at this late hour?"

"It is not to ask you what I know you will not tell me, Carey—the secret of Mansie of the Quarryheugh, and whether he be now in the bottom of the waters. I am myself in danger; and would know if you met any one on the road to-night, ere you came up to me?"

As he spoke, he proceeded to search for the heretical tract.

"So it was you," said the beadsman, "from whom, when sleepin by the roadside, was ta'en the written heresy that Blackburn's clerk, Geordie Dempster, was busy reading to his fellow-traveller, John o' the Priory, in Dame M'Gills, at the Haughfoot. The body o' young Riddlestain will be a cinder ere the sun has gane twelve times owre the East Neuk. If the commendator got Melville o' Falconcleugh burned in France, will he, think ye, hae ony great difficulty in getting Henry Leslie burned in Scotland?"

"Your words carry fire in them, Carey; but I have not said that the book was mine."

"There's nae occasion for the admission," replied the bluegown, "especially to ane wha lives by the auld kirk, and maybe ought, even now, to turn his face to St. Andrews, to evidence against you. You may be safe at Riddlestain for this night, but scarcely owre the morn. I will gie ye warnin, if ye will trust me."

"I will," replied Henry.

And the bluegown, waving his wand, continued on his journey, while the yaung man turned his steps, in fear, towards home. He again came to the cottage of Mossfell, and stood before the door. Margaret Bethune resided there, under the protection of old Dame Craigie. She was reputed an orphan; and, as such, she had secured the interest of the family at Riddlestain. By other claims she had secured the affection of the son; and never, until this night, had he observed in her conduct aught that excited any other feeling than love and respect, nor had what he had witnessed

in any material degree altered the opinion he had formed of her. Yet, what object had she to serve by visiting the dark chambers of Falconcleugh with a wandering blue-gown, at so late an hour of the night. He had heard from the servants at Riddlestain that she had been seen stealing from the old mansion at late hours; but she had uniformly avoided his inquiries for information. On this occasion, she might have gone to inquire as to the fate of Mansie, who had, apparently, been plunged into the waters. Yet why did the beadsman avoid the subject, and not offer satisfaction on a matter of importance to any one possessed of a spark of humanity? The danger of his own situation did not prevent him from indulging in these thoughts; and, as he stood and listened, he ascertained that the inmates had not gone to bed.

"I will see," he muttered, "whether Margaret and her old friend observe the same silence."

And he rapped at the door. He got admittance; and, seating himself by the fire—

"I am disturbed," he said. "As I returned this night from the scene of the death of my friend, I stood, with old Carey the beadsman, over the quarry of Falconcleugh, watching the motions of the old cripple who lives in that strange place. We heard a plash in the waters, and saw no more of him. Is it possible that he is drowned, and I, confused by selfish fears for my own safety, neglected to rouse my father's servants to make search for a fellow-creature."

He watched the countenance of Margaret as he spoke and finished. There was no trace there of the effects of a sensibility which usually responded to the minutest detail of suffering. He waited for her explanation of the object of her own visit to the quarry, but none was forthcoming.

"Ye needna fear for auld Mansie," said the dame. "If every plash o' a loose stane o' the auld wa's—ay, or a heugh-

bane o' the auld Melvilles, or broken branch in the waters o' the quarry—were a sign o' his death, twenty times has he dreed the doom."

"You spoke of your own danger, Henry," said Margaret. retreating from the subject "Is it from the persecutors of our secret, holy faith, who have this day burned Hamilton at St. Andrew's ?"

"It is—it is, Margaret," rejoined the youth, as he rose, dissatisfied at what he supposed a trait of disingenuousness or secret mystery. "I may be compelled to leave Scotland, if I would not follow my friend through the flames. But old Carey the beadsman, or Mansie the cripple, may console you in my absence." And, with these words, he hastened to the door.

"What mean you, Henry ?" said the girl, as she hastened after him, and stopped him, by seizing tremblingly his hand

"Lovers have no secrets, Margaret," replied he. "You might have told me at once that you and the beadsman were at Falconcleugh. Why, if it was nothing more but a compliance with the dictates of humanity, to see whether or not, as we suspected, a fellow-creature had fallen into the basin, where was the reason for secresy ? I am now satisfied the Droich is safe. He is nothing to me more than to others. who stand, and stare, and wonder at so strange a being in so strange a place; but a straw in the wind may tell us the direction of the argosy, and by this I may convict you of a want of ingenuousness. To-morrow I may be in flight for my life, in these fearful times, when the faggot surrounds the altar of the true faith; and how could I trust one with my secret who denies me satisfaction in a matter that concerns us scarcely more than it does the ordinary people of the world."

Who said that I was at Falconcleugh this night?" answered she. "Was it the beadsman? Tell me Henry, am

I betrayed by one of whom neither you nor I can deserve better? for he eats the unholy fruits of the faith he pretends to disown."

"No; Carey is as secret as yourself," rejoined he; "and, I hope, as true to me, who am also in his power."

"Thank God!" ejaculated she; "and now, Henry, if you love me, no more of Falconcleugh or its maimed inhabitant. Will you promise?"

"You put me to an unfair test, Margaret. I will reply to you in the same spirit. Will you, if I am forced to fly my country, accompany me as my wife?"

"I cannot," replied she. "There is one here who claims the sacrifice to my first love."

"Man or woman?" inquired he.

"I cannot answer more," said she. "The time is not come. When it is decreed that the fire shall no longer burn on the street of St. Andrews, you shall know all. Meanwhile, fly, if flight will save you; and take with you the pledge that I am yours, in heart and spirit, in all that belongs to true affection."

"So be it," he replied, hurriedly, and with a look of dissatisfaction. "Farewell! and it may be for ever."

With these words he left the cottage, and hurrying to Riddlestain, gave an account of the dangerous situation in which he was placed. His father saw the peril with perhaps a keener perception of the probable consequences. The act of 1525 against heretics was in full force, and the church authorities eked out its sanctions by wrested texts of Scripture, with an ingenuity and thirst of blood that threatened destruction to all heretics. It was resolved that Henry should be regulated by the warnings of the beadsman, whose sources of information would enable him to save the son of his old friend from ruin, if not death. The night was passed by the inmates of Riddlestain with fearful forebodings, and next morning, and during a part of the day,

Henry expected a secret visit from the beadsman. As the evening approached, he ventured forth to look for the bearer of intelligence, but as yet he was not visible. The moon had risen, and was again flinging her beams over the muir of Falconcleugh, and the old mansion of the Melvilles stood in solemn darkness in the midst of the scene. Again he was occupied by the thoughts suggested by what he had seen on the previous night, and what he had heard from Carey and Margaret. yet all his attempts to unravel their conduct and converse was unavailing, and he felt half inclined to seek again the cottage at Mossfell, to put the maiden to another test, while he would ease her mind of the reflections which the abrupt if not cruel terms of his departure would inevitably suggest. In the midst of his reverie he was startled by a noise, and, on looking round, he saw the dark figure of the inhabitant of the Quarryheugh coming along by his peculiar springing movement. He had never before seen him beyond the precincts of the hollow where he had taken up his residence; and felt as he might have felt on the approach of some being from another world. Every now and then the creature stopped, and beckoned him forwards, but Henry retained his position as if transfixed to the ground, and, in a short time, the hermit was by his side, with his face—which was covered with long hair, and the features almost obliterated by scars—turned up to him in the full light of the moon.

"The fires of other lands," said he, "are as scorching as those of the Scotch faggot. Thou wouldst yet fly to them, and leave the commendator Blackburn to seize Riddlestain, while thy father suffers the fate thou wouldst avoid."

"Let him remain," replied Henry, "who has faith and fortitude to pass through the fiery ordeal. You did not, good Mansie, see Hamilton's blackened body sink among the blazing faggots."

A half-suppressed groan rumbled in the throat of the Droich.

"What I have seen—what I have felt, thou may'st never know," said he. "But see, there are the church emissaries already after thee."

Henry looked round, and saw some horsemen scouring along the muir, at a considerable distance, in the direction of Riddlestain, Throwing himself down on the heath to avoid being seen, he remained in that position for a few minutes, and by the time he again lifted his head, his Mentor was a considerable distance from him, working his progress forwards, on his hands and knees, with great effort. The next moment a hand was on his shoulder, and he shuddered with terror.

"I'm maybe owre late," said the beadsman. "Quick, quick?—Blackburn and his hounds are awa' to Riddlestain wi' a warrant to apprehend you."

Henry followed the beadsman, who hurried on towards Falconcleugh.

"Now for your choice," said he. "Auld Mansie was giein ye counsel, maybe, to stay and stand your doom. What say ye—flight or flaught, an exile or an eizel?"

"I am unresolved," replied the youth.

"And by the faith o' the auld kirk, ye hae muckle time to ponder. See!—see! the bloodhounds have changed their course; their scent lies this way."

"I am lost!" ejaculated the young man.

"It maun be!—it maun be!" responded the beadsman, as he stood by the dark walls of Falconcleugh mansion, and seemed to hesitate. "There's nae ither mean. Here, here," he continued, as he descended some steps, and taking Henry by the arm, hurried him down, and then applied a key to a low door of the mansion, which he opened.

"There, there," he muttered, as he pushed the youth into a dark chamber. "I will turn their muzzles to the south"

The door was shut, and Henry immediately after heard the loud call of some horsemen, inquiring of the beadsman whether he had not with him a companion.

"Beggars hae short acquaintanceships," replied the blue-gown. "The word awmous severs good company. Wha are ye after wi' the loose rein and the bloody spur?"

"Henry Leslie, younger, of Riddlestain," replied one of the men. "Whither has he gone?"

"My een lack now their former licht," replied the beadsman; "but if ye, wha are younger, look weel to the east, ye'll see something yonder thicker, I ween, than a munebeam. Ye ken what I mean. Ane wha has got an awmous frae his father canna speak plainer, even to the friends o' the auld kirk."

"Well said, old Carey," cried the men, as they set forth with redoubled speed in the direction pointed out by the beggar.

Now, left to himself in a dark chamber of the old mansion of the Melvilles, Henry began to look round him for some place where, in the event of a search being there made for him, he might, with greater chance of success, elude their efforts. Mounting up a few steps, he reached a recess in the wall, which had once been enclosed by a door, the hinges of which still adhered to the stones, and there he crouched, under the gloom of an anxiety that pictured in the future the images of the various forms of persecution to which the heretics of the time were exposed. There was scarcely any light in the chamber. The flapping of the wings of bats, that had been adhering, in a state of torpor, to the roof, was the only sound that met his ear. A noisome damp pervaded the atmosphere; and a creeping sensation ran over his flesh, which, co-operating with his fear and solitude, made him shiver. For two hours he heard no indications of any one approaching the building; he began to think of removing, while, now being dark he could escape

to some greater distance from his enemies; yet he deemed it a dubious measure, while the absence of the beadsman augured danger from without. All was again still: the bats had again betaken themselves to the walls and the roof, and the sound of a cricket might have been heard throughout the extent of the dreary chamber. At length the grating sound of the hinges of a door startled him, and he stretched forth his head to watch the movement. The door opened, and a young woman, rolled up in a cloak, cautiously entered, taking from under her mantle a lantern, which she waved round and round, as if to ascertain that there was no one within. She then closed the door, and, proceeding to the side of the chamber next the quarry, made some audible knocks upon the side of an opening, somewhat of the form of a window, through which only a faint gleam of light had been able to struggle. This done, she sat down on the floor, and sighed heavily, muttering broken sentences in which the name of him who witnessed her strange proceedings could be distinguished. After a few minutes, the trees of the Quarryheugh, agitated by some living impulse, gave forth a rustling sound which, in the prevailing silence of the still night, reached the interior, and was observed by the listener. The movement continued, until the figure of the stunted inhabitant of the quarry appeared at the aperture, and, by two or three convulsive efforts, he flung himself into the apartment. The light from the lamp fell upon the couple. The girl still sat on the floor, and her companion reclined by her side, throwing out his maimed limbs, and turning up his face—which might have been fraught with terror to another—in the countenance of her who seemed to regard him with demonstrations of affection.

"Blackburn, the old enemy of our house, is forth again," said he; "and young Riddlestain may fall. Are you prepared?"

"It is to be hoped he will fly, father, and be yet saved to

me," answered she, sorrowfully, while she took some edibles from a small corbin, and placed them before him. Then drawing her hand over her eyes—"When is this wo and watching to cease?—when may I own my kindred, my love, and my faith?"

"Weep not—weep not," said the other; "or let it be up in the chamber of thy mother, whither I nightly drag those maimed and scorched limbs, that the heart which burns for vengeance on the enemies of the Melvilles may be quenched with the tribute of a love that mourns the dead. She cured these fragments of members when rescued from the stake, that I might come back to my country, a wreck whom none may recognise and all may scorn, but a daughter who must yet pity while she loves."

"Would that my love and my pity might be known," replied she. "How often have I asked permission to proceed to the court, to plead on my bended knees for relief to one who has already suffered what might expiate a thousand heresies—ay, more than death."

"While the commendator lives, it is vain, Margaret. I have waited for him long, to show him, in the mansion of my fathers, what his power has achieved—ha! ha! I would do him homage as the holder of a pendicle of the lands he has wrested from me—even the Quarryheugh. It is my duty. These arms, which the fires spared, might yet let him feel the strength of a vassal who has no power to follow him to the wars against the faithful."

"You fear me, father!" ejaculated the girl, as she bent over him, while he murmured, in growling accents, his threats. "The commendator is a man of power, and may get finished what his agents so wofully left undone in your exile."

"Power," groaned the other—"power, when alone in this dark chamber with me, to whom yet is left these arms!"

"Heaven keep him long away!" replied Margaret; "for

your strength is a by-word to the creatures who gaze at you till they fly in fear from one they deem supernatural. Hush—a door has opened above."

"Hie thee to Mossfell—quick—quick, child."

"Oh remember that you have a daughter!" ejaculated she, as she retreated.

"And that I had a wife whom my wrongs killed—yea, that I had once the face and form of a man!" he added, as he flung the fragments of victuals out of the window, and then swung himself out by the immense strength of his arms.

The sound from above, which had thus startled the father and daughter, now chained the ear of Leslie whose curiosity had been roused and gratified by the strange scene he had witnessed. Footsteps now sounded overhead; and, by and by, the tread was heard on the inside stairs leading to the lower appartment. At the same moment, the door from which Margaret had issued opened quickly, and the head of another individual was preseuted. It was too dark for Leslie to ascertain who it was; but the words "Escape—fly," repeated hurriedly, satisfied him that it was the beadsman who was thus making an effort tc save him. It was too late; the sound on the stairs indicated a near approach, and Leslie behoved to run the risk of being captured where he was, rather than make an effort to escape, which would be too clearly ineffectual. Several individuals now entered from the stair; and, by their statements, Leslie could perceive that they were in search of him.

"The bird, if ever here caged, has flown," cried one, as he approached the door and found it open.

"Then he cannot be far off," said another. "After him, and I shall wait here that you may report progress."

Several of the company immediately rushed to the door.

"Leave the light, Dempster," cried the voice of the last, and a man took from his cloak and placed on the floor a

lantern. They were in an instant gone, and he who was left began to pace along the dark room. He was closely muffled up to the chin; and, as he continued to walk backwards and forwards, he occasionally seized the folds of his riding cloak, and wrapped them round him, ejaculating broken statements, as his thoughts and feelings rose on the suggestion of his situation and pursuits.

"I shall get Riddlestain for my pains," said he; "ay, even as I have got Falconcleugh. The Church is a kind mother to her children; yet, has not this gift been as yet useless to me? Why? Down, down, rebellious answer of a coward heart—I am not afraid to occupy the house of him who expired in the flames by the condemnation which I accomplished. Now is the test. The bones of the Melvilles lie white in the Quarryheugh. I am alone in their old residence, and tremble not."

And, as he argued against his fears, he quickened his step, listening, at intervals, for sounds from without. Not altogether satisfied that he was alone, he took the lantern and held it up so that the light might penetrate into the corners of the chamber.

"All is still, lonely, and dreary," said he again, as he approached the north wall, and placed his head in the aperture. He started. There was a face there such as man might not look on and be not afraid. The lantern fell from his hands, and lay on the floor unextinguished. Receding backwards, and still keeping his eye on the object, he sought the low door on the west, and, finding it locked, betook himself to the stair, up which he flew with a rapidity corresponding with his fears; but it was only to descend again in greater difficulty, after he essayed an exit in that direction in vain, against a door also locked.

"Oh! the Droich!" at length he exclaimed, as if suddenly recollecting himself, and affecting a composure well enough suited, probably, to his discovery, yet scarcely authorised by his finding himself a prisoner.

At the moment of his exclamation, the cripple bounded on the floor, and stood before him on his knees with his arms folded, and his scorched face reflecting the glimmer of the lantern that lay before him emitting a weak light.

"Gilbert Blackburn!" sounded in deep accents through the chamber. The commendator recoiled and recovered himself.

"Mansie—so do the people call you"—said he, affecting conciliation, "you are but an uncourteous vassal—taking up your habitation on another's lands without leave, and startling your overlord by the humour of your gesture, while you should be paying his ground-fees."

"Mayhap, your honour," replied the cripple, "may remit these on behalf of my misfortunes. See you these limbs, and this countenance? I will show you them by the light of this lamp. Come closer to me. They say I am frightful to behold. Pshaw! Art thou afraid of a living man?—and yet thou didst now vaunt of thy courage, till thou didst even say that the spirits of the Melvilles would not terrify thee. Come closer to me, Gilbert Blackburn, and see if thou canst recognise in these features—horrid though they be—aught of the traces of one whom thou didst once think so well of that thou didst envy his lands of Falconcleugh."

"What! are you man or monster?" cried the commendator, as he receded before the progressive movements of his enemy.

"Both species are here," rejoined Melville; I am a man, though like the other denomination. They called me George Melville, when I bore another shape, and I was of Falconcleugh. By that name I once lived happy in this mansion blessed with love and the reward of good offices. By that name, too, I worshipped God by the light of reason; and by that name was burned at the stake, till pity relieved me, and amputation saved the wreck that was not worth saving. Art thou not satisfied? Search these features. All is not

gone. Enough of evidence there may be yet found to justify my claim for the remission of my ground-dues of Quarryheugh."

As he spoke, his countenance exhibited, in the midst of its deformity, the traces of a fury that was only for a few minutes kept in abeyance by the offering of bitter satire. The commendator, overcome by fear, and consciousness of a cruel and heartless purpose, kept receding; while Melville sure of his prey, and eying him with remorseless hatred, approached him by a series of leaps and contortions, more after the manner of an enraged and maimed beast of prey than that of a human being. The fame of his strength had gone forth with that of his other singular attributes; and probably, even if Blackburn had been gifted with ordinary courage, he would have quailed before the approach of the extraordinary being. Fear, however, had taken possession of a mind devoid of all courage, and he flew round the chamber, imploring that mercy which he had never shown to others. Leslie, who witnessed the extraordinary scene, meditated an interference, but he quelled the thought from a sense of his own danger, and continued through the gloom to mark the conduct of the parties. The pursuit was short. Blackburn, finding himself pressed towards an angle, attempted feebly to use his sword. It was seized and snapped asunder, and, next instant, he was down in the iron grip of his ruthless foe—writhing in the agony of fear, as he felt himself drawn towards the window that overlooked the chasm of the quarry. Twice the energies of an ordinary man of courage might not have resisted the cripple; and, though the struggles of despair somtimes transcend all calculation of supposed strength, they were too apparently, in this instance, unavailing. Two or three gigantic efforts, and the commendator was on the brink of the descent—his back to the chasm, his face to that of his intended destroyer. The light of the lamp served to show

Leslie the countenance of the victim, and a part of that of Melville; and he shuddered at the fearful expression of agony on the one part, and vengeance on the other. Not a word was spoken, but the chamber was filled with deep-drawn respirations. A faint scream burst from the commendator, and down, down he went into the chasm of dark waters; Melville drew a deep breath, as if he once again enjoyed the free use of his lungs, remained silent for a few minutes, and then deliberately issued from the aperture, by the mode he had been in the habit of following, and which, to him, was attended with no danger.

Leslie was terror-struck. His first thoughts concerned his own position. Found there, he would be reputed the murderer of the commendator; and he hastened down to betake himself to flight. The doors defied his efforts; and he put his head out of the window, only to withdraw it with a shudder of horror. In a few minutes, the door was opened by the beadsman.

"Ye'll be as weel oot here, I'm thinkin, Master Henry," said he.

"Know you what has been done, Carey?" cried Henry.

"I ken that baith you and I are owre lang here," replied the beadsman, as he hurried out.

In a few minutes the muir was clear. The two took different directions; nor was Henry Leslie heard of again for a period of two years. During this interval, an investigation was made into the circumstances attending the murder of Blackburn. There was no evidence brought home to Melville; and the opinion prevailed that the commendator had fallen accidentally into the chasm. Melville, meanwhile, withdrew himself again to the Continent, where he died. The property was again restored to Margaret, in consideration of the injuries sustained by her parents. The death of Hamilton produced, throughout Scotland, so great an effect, that the prosecutions for heresy were

for a time suspended, and Leslie returned to his native country. From the circumstance of Falconcleugh and Riddlestain being afterwards in the family of the Leslies, we may augur something of a union between the two lovers of our story. We merely, however, throw out this as a conjecture—our attention having been chiefly directed to the more important parts of the strange legend we have now given, which certainly does not exceed credibility.

THE LYKEWAKE.

I KNOW no place where one may be brought acquainted with the more credulous beliefs of our forefathers at a less expense of inquiry and exertion, than in a country lykewake. The house of mourning is naturally a place of sombre thoughts and ghostly associations. There is something, too, in the very presence and appearance of death, that leads one to think of the place and state of the dead. Cowper has finely said, that the man and the beast who stand together, side by side, on the same hill-top, are, notwithstanding their proximity, the denizens of very different worlds. And I have felt the remark to apply still more strongly when sitting beside the dead. The world of intellect and feeling in which we ourselves are, and of which the lower propensities of our nature form a province, may be regarded as including, in part at least, that world of passion and instinct in which the brute lives; and we have but to analyse and abstract a little, to form for ourselves ideas of this latter world from even our own experience. But by what process of thought can we bring experience to bear on the world of the dead? It lies entirely beyond us —a *terra incognita* of cloud and darkness, and yet the thing at our side—the thing over which we can stretch our hand—the thing dead to us but living to *it*—has entered upon it, and, however uninformed or ignorant before, knows more of its dark, and, to us, inscrutable mysteries, than all our philosophers and all our divines. Is it wonder that we would fain *put it to the question*—that we would fain catechise it, if we could, regarding its newly-acquired

experience—that we should fill up the gaps in the dialogue which its silence leaves to us, by imparting to one another the little we know regarding its *state* and its *place*—or that we should send our thoughts roaming in long excursions, to glean from the experience of the past all that it tells us of the occasional visits of the dead, and all that in their less taciturn and more social moments they have communicated to the living. And hence, from feelings so natural, and a train of associations so obvious, the character of a country lykewake and the cast of its stories—I say a *country* lykewake, for in at least all our larger towns, where a cold and barren scepticism has chilled the feelings and imaginations of the people, without, I fear, much improving their judgments, the conversation on such occasions takes a lower and less interesting range.

I once spent a night with a friend from the south, a man of an inquiring and highly philosophic cast of mind, at a lykewake in the upper part of the parish of Cromarty. I had excited his curiosity by an incidental remark or two of the kind I have just been dropping; and, on his expressing a wish that I should introduce him, by way of illustration, to some such scenes as I have been describing, we had set out together to the wake of an elderly female who had died that morning. Her cottage—a humble creation of stone and lime—was situated beside a thick fir wood, on the edge of the solitary Mulebuy, one of the dreariest and most extensive commons in Scotland. We had to pass, in our journey, over several miles of desolate muir, sprinkled with cairns and tumuli—the memorials of some forgotten conflict of the past; we had to pass, too, through a thick, dark wood, with here and there an intervening marsh, whitened over with moss and lichens, and which, from this circumstance, are known to the people of the country as the *white bogs*. Nor was the more distant landscape of a less gloomy character. On the one hand, there opened an interminable

expanse of muir, that went stretching onwards, mile beyond mile, bleak, dreary, uninhabited, and uninhabitable, till it merged into the far horizon. On the other, there rose a range of blue, solitary hills, towering, as they receded, into loftier peaks and bolder acclivities, till they terminated on the snow-streaked Ben Weavis. The season, too, was in keeping with the scene. It was drawing towards the close of autumn; and, as we passed through the wood, the falling leaves were eddying round us with every wind, or lay in rustling heaps at our feet.

"I do not wonder," said my companion, "that the superstitions of so wild a district as this should bear in their character some marks of a corresponding wildness. Night itself, in a populous and cultivated country, is attended with less of the stern and the solemn than mid-day amid solitudes like these. Is the custom of watching beside the dead of remote antiquity in this part of the country?"

"Far beyond the reach of either history or tradition," I said. "But it has gradually been changing its character, as the people have been changing theirs; and is now a very different thing from what it was a century ago. It is not yet ninety years since lykewakes in the neighbouring Highlands used to be celebrated with music and dancing; and even here, on the borders of the low country, they used invariably, like the funerals of antiquity, to be the scenes of wild games and amusements, never introduced on any other occasion. You remember how Sir Walter describes the funeral of Athelstane. The Saxon ideas of condolence were the most natural imaginable. If grief was hungry, they supplied it with food, if thirsty, they gave it drink. Our simple ancestors here seem to have reasoned by a similar process. They made their seasons of deepest grief their times of greatest merriment; and the more they regretted the deceased, the gayer were they at his wake and his funeral. A friend of mine, now dead, a very old man, has told

me that he once danced at a lykewake in the Highlands of Sutherland. It was that of an active and very robust man, taken away from his wife and family in the prime of life; and the poor widow, for the greater part of the evening, sat disconsolate beside the fire, refusing every invitation to join the dancers. She was at length, however, brought out by the father of the deceased. 'Little, little did he think,' he said, 'that she would be the last to dance at poor Rory's lykewake.'"

We reached the cottage, and went in. The apartment in which the dead lay was occupied by two men and three women. Every little piece of furniture it contained was hung in white, and the floor had recently been swept and sanded; but it was on the bed where the body lay, and on the body itself, that the greatest care had been lavished. The curtains had been taken down, and their place supplied by linen white as snow; and on the sheet that served as a counterpane, the body was laid out in a dress of white, fantastically crossed and recrossed in every direction by scalloped fringes, and fretted into a species of open work, at least intended to represent alternate rows of roses and tulips. A plate containing a little salt was placed over the breast of the corpse. As we entered, one of the women rose; and, filling two glasses with spirits, presented them to us on a salver. We tasted the liquor, and sat down on chairs placed for us beside the fire. The conversation, which had been interrupted by our entrance, began to flow apace; and an elderly female, who had lived under the same roof with the deceased, began to relate, in answer to the queries of one of the others, some of the particulars of her last illness and death.

THE STORY OF ELSPAT M'CULLOCH.

"Elspat was aye," she said, "a retired body, wi' a cast o' decent pride aboot her; an', though bare an' puirly aff

sometimes, in her auld days, she had never been chargeable to onybody. She had come o' decent, 'sponsible people, though they were a' low aneugh the day—ay, an' they were God-fearing people, too, wha had gien plenty in their time, and had aye plenty to gie. An' though they had been a' langsyne laid in the kirkyard—a' except hersel, puir body!—she wouldna disgrace their guid name, she said, by takin an alms frae ony ane. Her sma' means fell oot o' her hands afore her last illness. Little had aye dune her turn—but the little failed at last; an' sair, sair thocht did it gie her, for a while, what was to come o' her. I could hear her, in the butt-end o' the house, ae mornin, mair earnest an' langer in her prayers than usual—though she never neglected them, puir body—an' a' the early part o' that day she seemed to be no weel. She was aye up and down; an' I could ance or twice hear her gaunting at the fireside; but, when I went ben to her, an' asked what was the matter wi' her, she said she was just in her ordinar. She went oot for a wee; an' what did I do but gang to her amry, for I jaloused a' wasna richt there; an', oh! it was a sair sicht to see, neebors; but there was neither a bit o' bread nor a grain o' meal within its four corners—naething but the sealed-up greybeard, wi' the whisky, that, for twenty years an' mair, she had been keeping for her lykewake; an', ye ken, it was oot o' the question to think that she would meddle wi' it. Weel did I scold her, when she cam in, for being sae close-minded. I asked her what harm I had ever done to her, that she would rather hae died than hae trusted her wants to me; but, though she said nothing, I could see the tears in her ee; an' sae I stopped, and we took a late breakfast thegither at my fireside.

"She tauld me that mornin that she weel kent she wouldna lang be a trouble to onybody. The day afore had been Sabbath, an' every Sabbath mornin, for the last ten years, her worthy neebor the elder, whom they had buried

only four days afore, used to call on her, in the passing on his way to the kirk. 'Come awa, Elspat,' he would say; an' she used to be aye decent an' ready; for she liked his conversation; an' they aye gaed thegither to the kirk. She had been contracted, when a young lass, to a brither o' the elder's—a stout, handsome lad, but he had been ca'ed suddenly awa, atween the contract an' the marriage, an' Elspat, though she had afterwards mony a guid offer, had lived single for his sake. Weel, on the very mornin afore, just sax days after the elder's death, an' four after his burial, when Elspat was sittin dowie aside the fire, thinkin o' her guid auld neebor, the cry cam to the door just as it used to do; but, though the voice was the same, the words were a wee different. 'Elspat,' it said, 'mak ready an' come awa.' She rose hastily to the window, an' there, sure enough, was the elder turning the corner in his Sunday's bonnet an' his Sunday's coat. An' weel did she ken, she said, the meanin o' his call, and kindly did she tak it. An' if it was but God's wull that she suld hae enough to put her decently under the ground without going in debt to ony one, she would be weel content. She had already the linen for the dead-dress, she said; for she had span it for the purpose afore her contract wi' William, an' she had the whisky, too, for the wake; but she had naething anent the coffin an' the bedral.

"Weel, we took our breakfast, an' I did my best to comfort the puir body; but she looked very down-hearted for a' that. Aboot the middle o' the day, in cam the minister's boy wi' a letter. It was directed to his master, he said; but it was a' for Elspat; an' there was a five-pound note in it. It was frae a man who had left the country, mony, mony a year afore, a guid deal in her faither's debt. You would hae thought the puir thing wad hae grat her een out when she saw the money; but never was money mair thankfully received, or taen mair directly frae Heaven. It

set her aboon the warld, she said; an' coming at the time it did, an estate o' a thousand a-year wadna be o' mair use to her. Next mornin she didna rise, for her strength had failed her at ance, though she felt nae meikle pain, an' she sent me to get the note changed, an' to leave twenty shillings o't wi' the wright for a decent coffin, like her mither's, an' five shillings mair wi' the bedral, an' to tak in necessaries for a sick-bed wi' some o' the lave. Weel, I did that; an' there's still twa pounds o' the note yonder in the little cupboard.

"On the fifth mornin after she had been taken sae ill, I came in till ask after her—for my neebor here had relieved me o' that night's watchin, and I had gotten to my bed. The moment I opened the door I saw that the hail room was hung in white, just as ye' see it now; an' I'm sure it staid that way a minute or sae; but when I winked it went awa. I kent there was a change no far off; an' when I went up to the bed, Elspat didna ken me. She was wirkin wi' her hand at the blankets, as if she were pickin aff the little motes; an' I could hear the beginning o' the dead rattle in her throat. I sat at her bedside for awhile, wi' my neebor here; and when she spoke to us, it was to say that the bed had grown hard and uneasy, and that she wished to be brought oot to the chair. Weel, we indulged her, though we baith kent that it wasna in the bed the uneasiness lay. Her mind, puir body, was carried at the time; she just kent that there was to be a death an' a lykewake; but no that the death an' the lykewake were to be her ain; an' whan she looked at the bed, she bade us tak down the black curtains an' put up the white; an' tauld us where the white were to be found.

"'But where is the corp?' she said; 'it's no there—where is the corp?'

"'O Elspat, it will be there vera soon,' said my neebor; an' that satisfied her.

"She cam to hersel an hour afore she departed. God

had been very guid to her, she said, a' her life lang, an' he hadna forsaken her at the last. He had been guid to her when he had gien her friens, an' guid to her when he took them to himsel; an' she kent she was now going to baith Him and them. There wasna such a difference, she said, atween life and death as folk were ready to think. She was sure that, though William had been ca'ed awa suddenly, he hadna been ca'ed without being prepared; an' now that her turn had come, an' that she was goin to meet wi' him, it was maybe as weel that he had left her early; for, till she had lost him, she had been owre licht an' thochtless; an' had it been her lot to hae lived in happiness wi' him, she micht hae remained licht an' thochtless still. She bade us baith fareweel, an' thanked an' blessed us; an' her last breath went awa in a prayer no half-an-hour after. Puir, decent body!—but she's no puir now."

"A pretty portrait," whispered my companion, "of one of a class fast wearing away. Nothing more interests me in the story than the woman's undoubting faith in the supernatural; she does not even seem to know that what she believes so firmly herself, is so much as doubted by others. Try whether you can't bring up, by some means, a few other stories furnished with a similar machinery—a story of the second sight, for instance."

"The only way of accomplishing that," I replied, "is by contributing a story of the kind myself."

"The vision of the room hung in white," I said, "reminds me of a story related, about a hundred and fifty years ago, by a very learned and very ingenious countryman of ours—George, first Earl of Cromarty. His lordship, a steady Royalist, was engaged, shortly before the Restoration (he was then, by the way, only Sir George Mackenzie), in raising troops for the king, on his lands on the western coast of Ross-shire. There came on one of those days of rain and tempest so common in the district; and Sir George, with

some of his friends, were storm-bound in a solitary cottage, somewhere on the shores of Loch Broom. Towards evening, one of the party went out to look after their horses. He had been sitting beside Sir George, and the chair he had occupied remained empty. On Sir George's servant, an elderly Highlander, coming in, he went up to his master, apparently much appalled, and, tapping him on the shoulder, urged him to rise. 'Rise!' he said, 'rise! There's a dead man sitting on the chair beside you.' The whole party immediately started to their feet; but they saw only the empty chair. The dead man was visible to the Highlander alone. His head was bound up, he said, and his face streaked with blood, and one of his arms hung broken by his side. Next day, as a party of horsemen were passing along the steep side of a hill in the neighbourhood, one of the horses stumbled, and threw its rider; and the man, grievously injured by the fall, was carried, in a state of insensibility, to the cottage. His head was deeply gashed, and one of his arms was broken, though he ultimately recovered; and, on being brought to the cottage, he was placed, in a death-like swoon, in the identical chair which the Highlander had seen occupied by the spectre. Sir George relates the story, with many a similar story besides, in a letter to the celebrated Robert Boyle."

"I have perused it with much interest," said my friend "and wonder our booksellers should have suffered it to become so scarce. Do you not remember the somewhat similar story his lordship relates of the Highlander who saw the apparition of a troop of horse ride over the brow of a hill, and enter a field of oats, which, though it had been sown only a few days before, the horsemen seemed to cut down with their swords. He states that, a few months after, a troop of cavalry actually entered the same field, and carried away the produce, for fodder to their horses. He tells, too, if I remember aright, that, on the same expedition to which

your story belongs, one of his Highlanders, on entering a cottage, started back with horror;—he had met in the passage, he said, a dead man in his shroud, and saw people gathering for a funeral. And, as his lordship relates, one of the inmates of the cottage, who was in perfect health, at the time of the vision. died suddenly only two days after."

THE STORY OF DONALD GAIR.

"The second night," said an elderly man, who sat beside me, and whose countenance had struck me as highly expressive of serious thought, "is fast wearing out of this part of the country. Nor should we much regret it, perhaps. It seemed, if I may so speak, as something outside the ordinary dispositions of Providence, and, with all the horror and unhappiness that attended it, served no apparent good end. I have been a traveller in my youth, masters. About thirty years ago, I served for some time in the navy. I entered on the first breaking out of the Revolutionary War, and was discharged during the short peace of 1801. One of my chief companions on shipboard, for the first few years, was a young man, a native of Sutherland, named Donald Gair. Donald, like most of his countrymen was a staid, decent lad, of a rather melancholy cast; and yet there was occasions when he could be quite gay enough too. We sailed together in the Bedford, under Sir Thomas Baird; and, after witnessing the mutiny at the Nore—neither of us did much more than witness it, for in our case it merely transferred the command of the vessel from a very excellent captain to a set of low Irish doctor's-list men—we joined Admiral Duncan, then on the Dutch station. We were barely in time to take part in the great action. Donald had been unusually gay all the previous evening. We knew the Dutch had come out, and that there was to be an engagement on the morrow; and, though I felt no fear, the thought

that I might have to stand in a few brief hours before my Maker and my Judge, had the effect of rendering me serious. But my companion seemed to have lost all command of himself; he sang, and leaped, and shouted—not like one intoxicated—there was nothing of intoxication about him—but under the influence of a wild irrepressible flow of spirits. I took him seriously to task, and reminded him that we might both at that moment be standing on the verge of death and judgment. But he seemed more impressed by my remarking, that were his mother to see him, she would say he was *fey*.

"We had never been in action before with our captain, Sir Thomas. He was a grave, and, I believe, God-fearing man, and much a favourite with, at least, all the better seamen. But we had not yet made up our minds on his character—indeed, no sailor ever does, with regard to his officers, till he knows how they fight; and we were all curious to see how the parson, as we used to call him, would behave himself among the shot. But truly we might have had little fear for him. I have sailed with Nelson, and not Nelson himself ever showed more courage or conduct than Sir Thomas in that action. He made us all lie down beside our guns, and steered us, without firing a shot, into the very thickest of the fight; and, when we did open, masters, every broadside told with fearful effect. I never saw a man issue his commands with more coolness or self-possession.

"There are none of our continental neighbours who make better seamen, or who fight more doggedly, than the Dutch. We were in a blaze of flame for four hours. Our rigging was slashed to pieces; and two of our ports were actually knocked into one. There was one fierce, ill-natured Dutchman, in particular—a fellow as black as night, without so much as a speck of paint or gilding about him, save that he had a red lion on the prow—that fought us as long as he had a spar standing; and, when he struck at last. fully one-

half the crew lay either dead or wounded on the decks, and all his scupper-holes were running blood as freely as ever they had done water at a deck-washing. The Bedford suffered nearly as severely. It is not in the heat of action that we can reckon on the loss we sustain. I saw my comrades falling around me—falling by the terrible cannon-shot, as they came crashing in through our sides; I felt, too, that our gun wrought more heavily as our numbers were thinning around it; and, at times, when some sweeping chain-shot or fatal splinter laid open before me those horrible mysteries of the inner man which nature so sedulously conceals, I was conscious of a momentary feeling of dread and horror. But, in the prevailing mood, an unthinking anger, a dire thirsting after revenge, a dogged, unyielding firmness, were the chief ingredients. I strained every muscle and sinew; and amid the smoke, and the thunder, and the frightful carnage, fired and loaded, and fired and loaded, and with every discharge sent out, as it were, the bitterness of my whole soul against the enemy. But very different were my feelings when victory declared in our favour, and, exhausted and unstrung, I looked abroad among the dead. As I crossed the deck, my feet literally splashed in blood; and I saw the mangled fragments of human bodies sticking in horrid patches to the sides and beams above. There was a fine little boy aboard, with whom I was an especial favourite. He had been engaged, before the action, in the construction of a toy ship, which he intended sending to his mother; and I used sometimes to assist him, and to lend him a few simple tools; and, just as we were bearing down on the enemy, he had come running up to me with a knife, which he had borrowed from me a short time before.

"'Alick, Alick,' he said, 'I have brought you your knife; we are going into action, you know, and I may be killed, and then you would loose it."

"Poor little fellow! The first body I recognised was his.

Both his arms had been fearfully shattered by a cannon-shot, and the surgeon's tourniquets, which had been fastened below the shoulders, were still there; but he had expired ere the amputating knife had been applied. As I stood beside the body—little in love with war, masters—a comrade came up to me to say that my friend and countryman, Donald Gair, lay mortally wounded in the cockpit. I went instantly down to him. But never shall I forget, though never may I attempt to describe, what I witnessed that day, in that frightful scene of death and suffering. Donald lay in a low hammock, raised not a foot over the deck; and there was no one beside him, for the surgeons had seen at a glance the hopelessness of his case, and were busied about others of whom they had hope. He lay on his back, breathing very hard, but perfectly insensible; and in the middle of his forehead there was a round, little hole, without so much as a speck of blood about it, where a musket bullet had passed through the brain. He continued to breathe for about two hours; and, when he expired, I wrapped the body decently up in a hammock, and saw it committed to the deep. The years passed; and, after looking death in the face in many a storm and many a battle, peace was proclaimed, and I returned to my friends and my country.

"A few weeks after my arrival, an elderly Highland woman, who had travelled all the way from the further side of Loch Shin to see me, came to our door. She was the mother of Donald Gair, and had taken her melancholy journey to hear from me all she might regarding the last moments and death of her son. She had no English, and I had not Gaelic enough to converse with her; but my mother, who had received her with a sympathy all the deeper from the thought that her own son might have been now in Donald's place, served as our interpreter. She was strangely inquisitive, though the little she heard served only to increase her

grief; and you may believe it was not much I could find heart to tell her; for what was there in the circumstances of my comrade's death to afford pleasure to his mother? And so I waived her questions regarding his wound and his burial as I best could.

"'Ah,' said the poor woman to my mother, 'he need not be afraid to tell me all. I know too, too well that my Donald's body was thrown into the sea; I knew of it long ere it happened; and I have long tried to reconcile my mind to it—tried when he was a boy even; and so you need not be afraid to tell me now.'

"'And how,' asked my mother, whose curiosity was excited, 'could you have thought of it so early?'

"'I lived,' rejoined the woman, 'at the time of Donald's birth, in a lonely shieling among the Sutherland hills—a full day's journey from the nearest church. It was a long, weary road, over muirs and mosses. It was in the winter season, too, when the days are short; and so, in bringing Donald to be baptised, we had to remain a night by the way, in the house of a friend. We there found an old woman of so peculiar an appearance, that, when she asked me for the child, I at first declined giving it, fearing she was mad, and might do it harm. The people of the house, however, assured me she was incapable of hurting it; and so I placed it on her lap. She took it up in her arms, and began to sing to it; but it was such a song as none of us had ever heard before.'

"'Poor little stranger!' she said, 'thou hast come into the world in an evil time. The mists are on the hills, gloomy and dark, and the rain lies chill on the heather; and thou, poor little thing! hast a long journey through the sharp, biting winds, and thou art helpless and cold. Oh! but thy long after-journey is as dreary and dark. A wanderer shalt thou be over the land and the ocean; and in the ocean shalt thou lie at last. Poor little thing! I have waited for thee

long. I saw thee in thy wanderings, and in thy shroud, ere thy mother brought thee to the door; and the sounds of the sea, and of the deadly guns, are still ringing in my ears. Go, poor little thing! to thy mother—bitterly shall she yet weep for thee—and no wonder; but no one shall ever weep over thy grave, or mark where thou liest amid the deep green, with the shark and the seal.'

"'From that evening,' continued the mother of my friend, 'I have tried to reconcile my mind to what was to happen Donald. But, oh! the fond, foolish heart! I loved him more than any of his brothers, because I was to lose him soon; and though, when he left me, I took farewell of him for ever, for I knew I was never—never to see him more, I felt, till the news reached me of his fall in battle, as if he were living in his coffin. But, oh, do tell me all you know of his death. I am old and weak, but I have travelled far, far to see you, that I might hear all; and surely, for the regard you bore to Donald, you will not suffer me to return as I came.'

"But I need not dwell longer on the story. I imparted to the poor woman all the circumstances of her son's death, as I have done to you; and, shocking as they may seem, I found that she felt rather relieved than otherwise."

"This is not quite the country of the second sight," said my friend; "it is too much on the borders of the Lowlands. The gift seems restricted to the Highlands alone, and it is now fast wearing out even there."

"And weel it is," said one of the men, "that it should be sae. It is surely a miserable thing to ken o' coming evil, if we just merely ken that it is coming, an' that come it must, do what we may. Hae ye ever heard the story o' the kelpie that wons in the Conan?"

My friend replied in the negative.

THE STORY OF THE DOOMED RIDER.

"The Conan," continued the man, "is as bonny a river as we hae in a' the north country. There's mony a sweet sunny spot on its banks; an' mony a time an' aft hae I waded through its shallows, whan a boy, to set my little scantling-line for the trouts an' the eels, or to gather the big pearl-mussels that lie sae thick in the fords. But its bonny wooded banks are places for enjoying the day in—no for passing the nicht. I kenna how it is; it's nane o' your wild streams that wander desolate through a desert country, like the Aven, or that come rushing down in foam and thunder, owre broken rocks, like the Foyers, or that wallow in darkness, deep, deep in the bowels o' the earth, like the fearfu' Auldgraunt; an' yet no ane o' these rivers has mair or frightfuller stories connected wi' it than the Conan. Ane can hardly saunter owre half-a-mile in its course, frae where it leaves Contin till where it enters the sea, without passing owre the scene o' some frightful auld legend o' the kelpie or the water-wraith. An' ane o' the maist frightfu'-looking o' these places is to be found among the woods o' Conan House. Ye enter a swampy meadow, that waves wi' flags an' rushes like a corn-field in harvest, an' see a hillock covered wi' willows rising like an island in the midst. There are thick mirk woods on ilka side; the river, dark an' awesome, an' whirling round an' round in mossy eddies, sweeps awa behind it; an' there is an auld burying-ground, wi' the broken ruins o' an auld Papist kirk, on the tap. Ane can still see amang the rougher stanes the rose-wrought mullions o' an arched window, an' the trough that ance held the haly water. About twa hunder years ago—a wee mair maybe or a wee less, for ane canna be very sure o' the date o' thae auld stories—the building was entire; an' a spot near it, whar the wood now grows thickest, was laid out in a corn-field. The marks o' the furrows may still be seen amang the trees. A party o' Highlanders were

busily engaged, ae day in harvest, in cutting down the corn o' that field; an', just aboot noon, when the sun shone brightest an' they were busiest in the work, they heard a voice frae the river exclaim, '*The hour but not the man has come.*' Sure enough, on looking round, there was the kelpie stan'in in what they ca' a fause ford, just fornent the auld kirk. There is a deep black pool baith aboon an' below, but i' the ford there's a bonny ripple, that shows, as ane might think, but little depth o' water; an' just i' the middle o' that, in a place where a horse might swim, stood the kelpie. An' it again repeated its words—'*The hour but not the man has come;*' an' then, flashing through the water like a drake, it disappeared in the lower pool. When the folk stood wondering what the creature micht mean, they saw a man on horseback come spurring down the hill in hot haste, making straight for the fause ford. They could then understand her words at ance; an' four o' the stoutest o' them sprang oot frae amang the corn to warn him o' his danger, an' keep him back. An' sae they tauld him what they had seen an' heard, an' urged him either to turn back an' tak anither road, or stay for an hour or sae where he was. But he just wadna hear them, for he was baith unbelieving an' in haste, an' wauld hae taen the ford for a' they could say, hadna the Highlanders, determined on saving him whether he would or no, gathered round him, an' pulled him frae his horse, an' then, to mak sure o' him, locked him up in the auld kirk. Weel, when the hour had gone by—the fatal hour o' the kelpie—they flung open the door, an' cried to him that he might noo gang on his journey. Ah! but there was nae answer, though; an' sae they cried a second time, an' there was nae answer still; an' then they went in, an' found him lying stiff an' cauld on the floor, wi' his face buried in the water o' the very stone trough that we may still see amang the ruins. His hour had come, an' he had fallen in a fit, as 'twould seem, head

foremost among the water o' the trough, where he had been smothered—an' sae, ye see, the prophecy o' the kelpie availed naething."

"The very story," exclaimed my friend, "to which Sir Walter alludes, in one of the notes to 'The Heart of Midlothian.' The kelpie, you may remember, furnishes him with a motto to the chapter in which he describes the gathering of all Edinburgh to witness the execution of Porteous; and their irrepressible wrath, on ascertaining that there was to be no execution—'*The hour but not the man has come.*'"

"I remember making quite the same discovery," I replied, "about twelve years ago, when I resided for several months on the banks of the Conan, not half-a-mile from the scene of the story. One might fill a little book with legends of the Conan. The fords of the river are dangerous, especially in the winter season; and, about thirty years ago, before the erection of the fine stone bridge below Conan House, scarcely a winter passed in which fatal accidents did not occur; and these were almost invariably traced to the murderous malice of the water-wraith."

"But who or what is the water-wraith?" said my friend. "We heard just now of the kelpie, and it is the kelpie that Sir Walter quotes."

"Ah," I replied, "but we must not confound the kelpie and the water-wraith, as has become the custom in these days of incredulity. No two spirits, though they were both spirits of the lake and the river, could be more different. The kelpie invariably appeared in the form of a young horse; the water-wraith in that of a very tall woman, dressed in green, with a withered meagre countenance, ever distorted by a malignant scowl. It is the water-wraith, not the kelpie, whom Sir Walter should have quoted; and yet I could tell you curious stories of the kelpie, too."

"We must have them all," said my friend, "ere we part;

meanwhile, I should like to hear some of your stories of the Conan."

"As related by me," I replied, "you will find them rather meagre in their details. In my evening walks along the river, I have passed the ford a hundred times out of which, only a twelvemonth before, as a traveller was entering it on a moonlight night, the water-wraith started up, not four yards in front of him, and pointed at him with her long skinny fingers, as if in mockery. I have leaned against the identical tree to which a poor Highlander clung, when, on fording the river by night, he was seized by the goblin. A lad who accompanied him, and who had succeeded in gaining the bank, strove to assist him, but in vain: the poor man was dragged from his hold into the current, where he perished. The spot has been pointed out to me, too, in the opening of the river, where one of our Cromarty fishermen, who had anchored his yawl for the night, was laid hold of by the spectre when lying asleep on the beams, and almost dragged over the gunwale into the water. Our seafaring men still avoid dropping anchor, if they possibly can, after the sun has set, in what they term *the fresh*—that is, in those upper parts of the Frith where the waters of the river predominate over those of the sea.

"The scene of what is deemed one of the best-authenticated stories of the water-wraith, lies a few miles higher up the river. It is a deep, broad ford, through which horsemen, coming from the south, pass to Brahan Castle. A thick wood hangs over it on the one side; on the other, it is skirted by a straggling line of alders and a bleak muir. On a winter night, about twenty-five years ago, a servant of the late Lord Seaforth had been drinking with some companions till a late hour, at a small house at the upper part of the muir; and when the party broke up, he was accompanied by two of them to the ford. The moon was at full, and the river, though pretty deep in flood, seemed

no way formidable to the servant; he was a young, vigorous man, and mounted on a powerful horse; and he had forded it, when half-a-yard higher on the bank, twenty times before. As he entered the ford, a thick cloud obscured the moon; but his companions could see him guiding the animal; he rode in a slanting direction across the stream, until he had reached nearly the middle, when a dark, tall figure seemed to start out of the water, and lay hold of him. There was a loud cry of distress and terror, and a frightful snorting and plunging of the horse; a moment passed, and the terrified animal was seen straining towards the opposite bank, and the ill-fated rider struggling in the stream. In a moment more he had disappeared."

THE STORY OF FAIRBURN'S GHOST.

"I suld weel ken the Conan," said one of the women, who had not yet joined in the conversation; "I was born no a stane's cast frae the side o't. My mother lived in her last days beside the auld Tower o' Fairburn, that stan's sae like a ghaist aboon the river, an' looks down on a' its turns an' windings frae Contin to the sea; my father, too, for a twelvemonth or sae afore his death, had a boat on ane o' its ferries, for the crossing, on week days, o' passengers, an' o' the kirk-going folks on Sunday. He had a little bit farm beside the Conan; an' just got the boat by way o' eiking out his means—for we had aye aneugh to do at rent-time, an' had, maybe, less than plenty through a' the rest o' the year, besides. Weel, for the first ten months or sae, the boat did brawly. The Castle o' Brahan is no half-a-mile frae the ferry, an' there were aye a hantle o' gran' folk comin and gangin frae the Mackenzie, an' my faither had the crossin o' them a'. An', besides, at Marti'mas, the kirk-going people used to send him firlots o' bere an' pecks o' oatmeal; an' he soon began to find that the bit boat was

to do mair towards paying the rent o' the farm than the farm itsel.

"The Tower o' Fairburn is aboot a mile and a-half aboon the ferry. It stan's by itsel on the tap o' a heathery hill, an' there are twa higher hills behind it. Beyond, there spreads a black, dreary desert, where ane micht wander a lang simmer's day withoot seeing the face o' a human creature, or the kindly smoke o' a lum. I daresay nane o' you hae heard hoo the Mackenzies o' Fairburn an' the Chisholms o' Strathglass pairted that bit o' kintra atween them. Nane o' them could tell where the lands o' the ane ended or the ither began, an' they were that way for generations, till they at last thocht them o' a plan o' division. Each o' them gat an auld wife o' seventy-five, an' they set them aff ae Monday, at the same time, the ane frae Erchless Castle, an' the ither frae the Tower—warning them, aforehan', that the braidness o' their maisters' lands depended on their speed; for where the twa would meet amang the hills, there would be the boundary. An' you may be sure that neither o' them lingered by the way that morning. They kent there was mony an ee on them, an' that their names would be spoken o' in the kintra-side lang after themsels were dead an' gane; but it sae happened that Fairburn's carline, wha had been his nurse, was ane o' the slampest women in a' the north o' Scotland, young or auld; an', though the ither did weel, she did sae meikle better, that she had got owre twenty lang Highland miles or the ither had got owre fifteen. They say it was a droll sicht to see them at the meeting: they were baith tired almost to fainting; but no sooner did they come in sicht o' ane anither, at the distance o' a mile or sae, than they began to rin. An' they ran, an' better ran, till they met at a little burnie; an' there wad they hae focht, though they had neer seen ane anither atween the een afore, had they had strength aneugh left them; but they had neither pith for fechtin, nor breath for scolding, an' sae they just

sat down an' girned at ane anither across the stripe. The Tower o' Fairburn is naething noo but a dismal ruin o' five broken storeys—the ane aboon the other—an' the lands hae gane oot o' the auld family; but the story o' the twa auld wives is a weel-kent story still.

"The laird o' Fairburn, in my faither's time, was as fine an open-hearted gentleman as was in the hail country. He was just particular guid to the puir; but the family had ever been that—ay, in their roughest days, even whan the tower had neither door nor window in the lower storey, an' only a wheen shot-holes in the storey aboon. There wasna a puir thing in the kintra but had reason to bless the laird; an' at ae time he had nae fewer than twelve puir orphans living aboot his hoose at ance. Nor was he in the least a proud, haughty man; he wad chat for hours thegither wi' ane o' his puirest tenants; an' ilka time he crossed the ferry, he wad tak my faither wi' him, for company just, maybe half-a-mile on his way out or hame. Weel, it was ae nicht aboot the end o' May—a bonny nicht, an hour or sae after sun-down—an' my faither was mooring his boat, afore going to bed, to an auld oak-tree, when wha does he see but the laird o' Fairburn coming down the bank? Od, thocht he, what can be taking the laird frae hame sae late as this? I thocht he had been no weel. The laird cam steppin into the boat, but, instead o' speakin frankly, as he used to do, he jist waved his hand, as the proudest gentleman in the kintra micht, an' pointed to the ither side. My faither rowed him across; but, oh! the boat felt unco dead an' heavy, an' the water stuck around the oars as gin it had been tar; an' he had just aneugh ado, though there was but little tide in the river, to mak oot the ither side. The laird stepped oot, an' then stood, as he used to do, on the bank, to gie my faither time to fasten his boat an' come alang wi' him; an', were it no for that, the puir man wadna hae thocht o' going wi' him that nicht; but, as it was, he just

moored his boat an' went. At first he thocht the laird must hae got some bad news that made him sae dull, an' sae he spoke on, to amuse him, aboot the weather an' the markets; but he found he could get very little to say, an' he felt as are an' eerie in passing through the woods, as gin he had been passing alane through a kirkyard. He noticed, too, that there was a fearsome flichtering an' shricking amang the birds that lodged in the tree-taps aboon them; an' that, as they passed the *Talisoe*, there was a colly on the tap o' a hillock that set up the awfullest yowling he had ever heard. He stood for awhile in sheer consternation, but the laird beckoned him on, just as he had done at the river side, an' sae he gaed a bittie farther alang the wild rocky glen that opens into the deer-park. But, oh! the fright that was amang the deer! They had been lying asleep on the knolls, by sixes an' sevens, an' up they a' started at ance, and gaed driving aff to the far end o' the park as if they couldna be far aneugh frae my faither or the laird. Weel, my faither stood again, an' the laird beckoned an' beckoned as afore; but, Gude tak us a' in keeping! whan my faither looked up in his face, he saw it was the face o' a corp—it was white an' stiff, an' the nose was thin an' sharp, an' there was nae winking wi' the wide open een. Gude preserve us! my faither didna ken where he was stan'in—didna ken what he was doing; an', though he kept his feet, he was just in a kind o' swarf, like. The laird spoke twa-three words to him—something aboot the orphans, he thocht; but he was in such a state that he couldna tell what; an' whan he cam to himsel, the apparition was awa. It was a bonny clear nicht when they had crossed the Conan; but there had been a gatherin o' black cluds i' the lift as they gaed, an' there noo cam on, in the clap o' a han', ane o' the fearsomest storms o' thunder an' lightning that was ever seen in the country. There was a thick gurly aik smashed to shivers owre my faither's head, though nane o' the splinters steered him; an'

whan he reached the river, it was roaring frae bank to brae like a little ocean; for a water-spout had broken amang the hills, an' the trees it had torn doun wi' it were darting alang the current like arrows. He crossed in nae little danger, an' took to his bed; an' though he rase an' went aboot his wark for twa-three months after, he was never, never his ain man again. It was found that the laird had departed no five minutes afore his apparition had come to the ferry; an' the very last words he had spoke—but his mind was carried at the time—was something aboot my faither."

THE STORY OF THE LAND FACTOR.

"There maun hae been something that weighed on his mind," remarked one of the women, "though your faither had nae power to get it frae him. I mind that, whan I was a lassie, there happened something o' the same kind. My faither had been a tacksman on the estate o' Blackhall; an', as the land was sour an' wat, an' the seasons for awhile backward, he aye contrived—for he was a hard-working, carefu' man—to keep us a' in meat and claith, and to meet wi' the factor. But, wae's me! he was sune taen frae us. In the middle o' the seed-time, there cam a bad fever intil the country; an' the very first that died o't was my puir faither. My mither did her best to keep the farm, an' haud us a' thegither. She got a carefu', decent lad to manage for her, an' her ain ee was on everything; an' had it no been for the cruel, cruel factor, she micht hae dune gay weel. But never had the puir tenant a waur friend than Ranald Keilly. He was a toun writer, an' had made a sort o' livin, afore he got the factorship, just as toun writers do in ordinar. He used to be gettin the haud o' auld wives' posies when they died; an' there was aye some litigious, troublesome folk in the place, too, that kept him doing a little in the way o' troublin their neebors; an'

sometimes, when some daft, gowkit man, o' mair means than sense, couldna mismanage his ain affairs aneugh, he got Keilly to mismanage them for him. An' sae he had picked up a bare livin in this way; but the factorship made him just a gentleman. But, oh, an ill use did he mak o' the power that it gied him owre puir, honest folk. Ye maun ken that, gin they were puir, he liked them a' the waur for being honest; but, I daresay, that was natural enough for the like o' him. He contrived to be baith writer an' factor, ye see; an' it wad just seem that his chief aim in the ae capacity was to find employment for himsel in the ither. If a puir tenant was but a day behind-hand wi' his rent, he had creatures o' his ain that used to gang half-an'-half wi' him in their fees; an' them he wad send aff to poind him; an' then, if the expenses o' the poindin werena forthcoming, as weel as what was owing to the master, he wad hae a roup o' the stocking twa-three days after; an' anither account, as a man o' business, for that. An' when things were going dog-cheap—as he took care that they should sometimes gang—he used to buy them in for himsel, an' pairt wi' them again for maybe twice the money. The laird was a quiet, silly, good-natured man; an' though he was tauld weel o' the factor at times—ay, an' believed it, too—he just used to say, 'Oh, puir Keilly, what wad he do gin I were to pairt wi' him? He wad just starve.' An' oh, sirs, his pity for him was bitter cruelty to mony, mony a puir tenant, an' to my mither amang the lave.

"The year after my faither's death was cauld an' wat, an' oor stuff remained sae lang green, that we just thocht we wouldna get it cut ava. An' when we did get it cut, the stacks, for the first whilie, were aye heatin wi' us; an' when Marti'mas came, the grain was still saft an' milky, an' no fit for the market. The term came round, an' there was little to gie the factor in the shape o' money, though there was baith corn an' cattle; an' a' that we wanted was just a

little time. An—but we had fa'en into the hands o' ane that never kent pity. My mither hadna the money gin, as it were, the day, an' on the morn, the messengers came to poind. The roup was no a week after; an', oh, it was a grievous sicht to see hoo the crop an' the cattle went for just naething. The farmers were a' puirly aff wi' the late har'st, an' had nae money to spare; an' sae the factor knocked in ilka thing to himsel, wi' hardly a bid against him. He was a rough-faced, little man, wi' a red, hooked nose—a guid deal gien to whisky, an' vera wild an' desperate when he had taen a glass or twa aboon ordinar; an', on the day o' the roup, he raged like a perfect madman. My mither spoke to him again an' again, wi' the tear in her ee, an' implored him, for the sake o' the orphan an' the widow, no to harry hersel and her bairns; but he just cursed an' swore a' the mair, an' knocked down the stacks an' the kye a' the faster; an' whan she spoke to him o' the Ane aboon a', he said that Providence gied lang credit, an' reckoned on a lang day, an' that he wad tak him intil his ain hands. Weel, the roup cam to an end, an' the sum o' the whole didna come to meikle mair nor the rent, an' clear the factor's lang, lang account for expenses; an' at nicht my mither was a ruined woman. The factor staid up late an' lang, drinking wi' some creatures o' his ain, an' the last words he said, on going to his bed, was, that he hadna made a better day's wark for a twelvemonth. But, Gude tak us a' in keeping! in the morning he was a corp—a cauld, lifeless corp, wi' a face as black as my bannet.

"Weel, he was buried, an' there was a grand character o' him putten in the newspapers, an' we a' thocht we were to hear nae mair aboot him. My mither got a wee bittie o' a house on the farm o' a neebor, an' there we lived dowie aneugh; but she was aye an eident, working woman, an' she now span late an' early for some o' her auld freends, the farmers' wives; an' her sair-won penny, wi' what we

got frae kindly folk wha minded us in better times, kept us a' alive. Meanwhile, strange stories o' the dead factor began to gang aboot the kintra. First, his servants, it was said, were hearing aye curious noises in his counting office. The door was baith locked an' sealed, waiting till his freends would cast up, for there were some doots aboot them; but, locked an' sealed as it was, they could hear it opening an' shutting every nicht, an' hear a rustling among the papers, as gin there had been half-a-dozen writers scribbling among them at ance. An' then, Gude preserve us a'! they could hear Keilly himself, as if he were dictating to his clerk. An', last o' a', they could see him in the gloamin, nicht an' mornin, ganging aboot his hoose, wringing his hands, an' aye, aye muttering to himsel aboot roups and poindings. The servant-girls left the place to himsel; an' the twa lads that wrought his farm, an' slept in a hay-loft, were sae disturbed, nicht after nicht, that they had jist to leave it to himsel too.

"My mither was ae nicht wi' some o' her spinnin at a neeborin farmer's—a worthy, God-fearing man, an' an elder o' the kirk. It was in the simmer time, an' the nicht was bricht and bonny; but, in her backcoming, she had to pass the empty hoose o' the dead factor, an' the elder said that he would tak a step hame wi' her, for fear she michtna be that easy in her mind. An' the honest man did sae. Naething happened them in the passing, except that a dun cow, ance a great favourite o' my mither's, came up lowing to them, puir beast! as gin she wauld hae better liked to be gaun hame wi' my mither than stay where she was. But the elder didna get aff sae easy in the backcoming. He was passing beside a thick hedge, when what does he see but a man inside the hedge, taking step for step wi' him as he gaed! The man wore a dun coat, an' had a huntin-whip under his arm, an' walked, as the elder thought, very like what the dead factor used to do when he had gotten a glass or twa

aboon ordinar. Weel, they cam to a slap in the hedge, an' out cam the man at the slap; an', Gude tak us a' in keeping! it was, sure aneugh, the dead factor himsel! There were his hook nose, an' his rough, red face—though it was, maybe, bluer noo than red; an' there were the boots an' the dun coat he had worn at my mither's roup, an' the very whip he had lashed a puir gangrel woman wi' no a week afore his death. He was muttering something to himsel; but the elder could only hear a wordie noo an' then. 'Poind and roup,' he would say, 'poind and roup;' an' then there would come out a blatter o' curses—'Hell! hell! an' damn, damn!' The elder was a wee fear-stricken at first, as wha wadna? but then the ill words, an' the way they were said, made him angry—for he could never hear ill words withoot checking them—an' sae he turned round wi' a stern brow, an' asked the appearance what it wanted, an' why it should hae come to disturb the peace o' the kintra, and to disturb him? It stood still at that, an' said, wi' an awsome grane, that it couldna be quiet in the grave till there were some justice done to Widow Stuart. It then tauld him that there were forty gowd guineas in a secret drawer in his desk, that hadna been found, an' tauld him where to get them, an' that he wad need gang wi' the laird an' the minister to the drawer, an' gie them a' to the widow. It couldna hae rest till then, it said, nor wad the kintra hae rest either. It willed that the lave o' the gear should be gien to the puir o' the parish; for nane o' the twa folk that laid claim to it had the shadow o' a richt. An' wi' that the appearance left him. It just went back through the slap in the hedge; an', as it stepped owre the ditch, vanished in a puff o' smoke.

"Weel, but to cut short a lang story, the laird and the minister were at first gay slow o' belief—no that they misdoubted the elder, but they thocht that he must hae been deceived by a sort o' waking dream. But they soon changed

their minds, for, sure enough, they found the forty guineas in the secret drawer. An' the news they got frae the south about Keilly was just as the appearance had said—no ane mair nor anither had a richt to his gear, for he had been a foundlin, an' had nae freends. An' sae my mither got the guineas, an' the parish got the rest, an' there was nae mair heard o' the apparition. We didna get back oor auld farm; but the laird gae us a bittie that served oor turn as weel; an', or my mither was ca'ed awa frae us, we were a' settled in the warld, an' doin for oorsels."

THE STORY OF THE MEALMONGER.

"It is wonderful," remarked the decent-looking, elderly man who had contributed the story of Donald Gair—"it is wonderful how long a recollection of that kind may live in the memory without one's knowing it is there. There is no possibility of one taking an inventory of one's recollections. They live unnoted and asleep, till roused by some likeness of themselves, and then up they start, and answer to it, as 'face answereth to face in a glass.' There comes a story into my mind, much like the last, that has lain there all unknown to me for the last thirty years, nor have I heard any one mention it since; and yet, when I was a boy, no story could be better known. You have all heard of the dear years that followed the harvest of '40, and how fearfully they bore on the poor. The scarcity, doubtless, came mainly from the hand of Providence, and yet man had his share in it too. There were forestallers of the market, who gathered their miserable gains by heightening the already enormous price of victuals, thus adding starvation to hunger; and among the best known and most execrated of these was one M'Kechan, a residenter in the neighbouring parish. He was a hard-hearted, foul-spoken man; and often what he *said* exasperated the people as much against him as what he

did. When, on one occasion, he bought up all the victuals on a market, there was a wringing of hands among the women, and they cursed him to his face; but, when he added insult to injury, and told them, in his pride, that he had not left them an ounce to foul their teeth, they would that instant have taken his life, had not his horse carried him through. He was a mean, too, as well as a hard-hearted man, and used small measures and light weights. But he made money, and deemed himself in a fair way of gaining a character on the strength of that alone, when he was seized by a fever, and died after a few days' illness. Solomon tells us that, when the wicked perish, there is shouting—there was little grief in the sheriffdom when M'Kechan died; but his relatives buried him decently, and, in the course of the next fortnight, the meal fell two-pence the peck. You know the burying-ground of St Bennet's—the chapel has long since been ruinous, and a row of wasted elms, with white skeleton-looking tops, run around the enclosure, and look over the fields that surround it on every side. It lies out of the way of any thoroughfare, and months may sometimes pass, when burials are unfrequent, in which no one goes near it. It was in St Bennet's that M'Kechan was buried; and the people about the farmhouse that lies nearest it were surprised, for the first month after his death, to see the figure of a man, evening and morning, just a few minutes before the sun had risen, and a few after it had set, walking round the yard, under the elms, three times, and always disappearing when it had taken the last turn, beside an old tomb near the gate. It was, of course, always clear daylight when they saw the figure; and the month passed ere they could bring themselves to suppose it was other than a thing of flesh and blood like themselves. The strange regularity of its visits, however, at length bred suspicion; and the farmer himself, a plain, decent man, of more true

courage than men of twice the pretence, determined, one evening, on watching it. He took his place outside the wall, a little before sunset, and no sooner had the red light died away on the elm tops, than up started the figure from among the ruins on the opposite side of the burying-ground, and came onward in its round—muttering incessantly as it came, 'Oh, for mercy sake! for mercy sake!' it said, 'a handful of meal—I am starving! I am starving! a handful of meal!' And then, changing its tone into one still more doleful, 'Oh,' it exclaimed, 'alas, for the little lippie and the little peck! alas, for the little lippie and the little peck!' As it passed, the farmer started up from his seat; and there, sure enough, was M'Kechan, the corn factor, in his ordinary dress, and, except that he was thinner and paler than usual, like a man suffering from hunger, presenting nearly his ordinary appearance. The figure passed, with a slow, gliding sort of motion; and, turning the farther corner of the burying-ground, came onward in its second round; but the farmer, though he had felt rather curious than afraid as it went by, found his heart fail him as it approached the second time, and, without waiting its coming up, set off homeward through the corn. The apparition continued to take its rounds, evening and morning, for about two months after, and then disappeared for ever. Mealmongers had to forget the story, and to grow a little less afraid, ere they could cheat with their accustomed coolness. Believe me, such beliefs, whatever may be thought of them in the present day, have not been without their use in the past."

As the old man concluded his story, one of the women rose to a table in the little room, and replenished our glasses. We all drank in silence.

"It is within an hour of midnight," said one of the men, looking at his watch; "we had better recruit the fire and draw in our chairs; the air aye feels chill at a lykewake or a burial. At this time to-morrow we will be lifting the corpse."

There was no reply. We all drew in our chairs nearer the fire, and for several minutes there was a pause in the conversation, but there were more stories to be told, and before the morning, many a spirit was evoked from the grave, the vasty deep, and the Highland stream, whose histories we may yet give in a future number.

THE PENNY-WEDDING.

If any of our readers have ever seen a Scottish penny-wedding they will agree with us, we daresay, that it is a very merry affair, and that its mirth and hilarity is not a whit the worse for its being, as it generally is, very homely and unsophisticated. The penny-wedding is not quite so splendid an affair as a ball at Almack's; but, from all we have heard and read of these aristocratic exhibitions, we for our own parts would have little hesitation about our preference, and what is more, we are quite willing to accept the imputation of having a horrid bad taste.

It is very well known to those who know anything at all of penny-weddings, that, when a farmer's servant is about to be married—such an occurrence being the usual, or, at least, the most frequent occasion of these festivities—all the neighbouring farmers, with their servants, and sometimes their sons and daughters, are invited to the ceremony; and to those who know this, it is also known that the farmers so invited are in the habit of contributing each something to the general stock of good things provided for the entertainment of the wedding guests—some sending one thing and some another, till materials are accumulated for a feast, which, both for quantity and quality, would extort praise from Dr Kitchener himself, than whom no man ever knew better what good living was. To all this a little money is added by the parties present, to enable the young couple to *plenish* their little domicile.

Having given this brief sketch of what is called a penny-wedding, we proceed to say that such a merry doing as this

took place, as it had done a thousand times before, in a certain parish (we dare not be more particular) in the south of Scotland, about five-and-twenty years ago. The parties—we name them, although it is of no consequence to our story—were Andrew Jardine and Margaret Laird, both servants to a respectable farmer in that part of the country of the name of Harrison, and both very deserving and well-doing persons.

On the wedding-day being fixed, Andrew went himself to engage the services of Blind Willie Hodge, the parish fiddler, as he might with all propriety be called, for the happy occasion; and Willie very readily agreed to attend gratuitously, adding, that he would bring his best fiddle along with him, together with an ample supply of fiddle-strings and rosin.

"An' a wee bit box o' elbow grease, Willie," said Andrew, slily; "for ye'll hae gude aught hours o't, at the very least."

"I'll be sure to bring that too, Andrew," replied Willie, laughing; "but it's no aught hours that 'll ding me, I warrant. I hae played saxteen without stoppin except to rosit."

"And to weet your whistle," slipped in Andrew.

"Pho, that wasna worth coontin. It was just a mouthfu' and at it again," said Willie. "I just tak, Andrew," he went on, "precisely the time o' a demisemiquaver to a tumbler o' cauld liquor, such as porter or ale; and twa minims or four crotchets to a tumbler o' het drink, such as toddy; for the first, ye see, I can tak aff at jig time, but the other can only get through wi' at the rate o' 'Roslin Castle,' or the 'Dead March in Saul,' especially when it's brought to me scadding het, whilk sude never be dune to a fiddler."

Now, as to this very nice chromatic measurement, by Willie, of the time consumed in his potations, while in the exercise of his calling, we have nothing to say. It may be perfectly correct for aught we know; but when Willie said

that he played at one sitting, and with only the stoppages he mentioned, for sixteen hours, we rather think he was drawing fully a longer bow than that he usually played with. At all events this we know, that Willie was a very indifferent if not positively a very bad fiddler; but he was a good-humoured creature, harmless and inoffensive, and, moreover, the only one of his calling in the parish, so that he was fully as much indebted to the necessities of his customers for the employment he obtained, as to their love or charity.

The happy day which was to see the humble destinies of Andrew Jardine and Margaret Laird united having arrived, Willie attired himself in his best, popped his best fiddle—which was, after all, but a very sober article, having no more tone than a salt-box—into a green bag, slipped the instrument thus secured beneath the back of his coat, and proceeded towards the scene of his impending labours. This was a large barn, which had been carefully swept and levelled for the "light fantastic *toes*" of some score of ploughmen and dairymaids, not formed exactly after the Chinese fashion. At the further end of the barn stood a sort of platform, erected on a couple of empty herring-barrels; and on this again a chair was placed. This distinguished situation, we need hardly say, was designed for Willie, who from that elevated position was to pour down his heel-inspiring strains amongst the revellers below. When Willie, however, came first upon the ground, the marriage party had not yet arrived. They were still at the manse, which was hard by, but were every minute expected. In these circumstances, and it being a fine summer afternoon, Willie seated himself on a stone at the door, drew forth his fiddle, and struck up with great vigour and animation, to the infinite delight of some half-dozen of the wedding guests, who, not having gone with the others to the manse, were now, like himself, waiting their arrival. These immediately commenced foot-

ing it to Willie's music on the green before the door, and thus presented a very appropriate prelude to the coming festivities of the evening.

While Willie was thus engaged, an itinerant brother in trade, on the look-out for employment, and who had heard of the wedding, suddenly appeared, and stealing up quietly beside him, modestly undid the mouth of his fiddle-bag, laid the neck of the instrument bare, and drew his thumb carelessly across the strings, to intimate to him that a rival was near his throne. On hearing the sound of the instrument, Willie stopped short.

"I doubt, frien, ye hae come to the wrang market," he said, guessing at once the object of the stranger. "An' ye hae been travellin too, I daresay?" he continued, good-naturedly, and not at all offended with the intruder, for whom and all of his kind he entertained a fellow feeling.

"Ay," replied the new Orpheus, who was a tall, good-looking man of about eight-and-twenty years of age, but very poorly attired, "I hae been travellin, as ye say, neebor, an' hae come twa or three miles out o' my way to see if I could pick up a shilling or twa at this weddin."

"I am sorry now, man, for that," said Willie, sympathisingly. "I doot ye'll be disappointed, for I hae been engaged for't this fortnight past. But I'll tell ye what—if ye're onything guid o' the fiddle, ye may remain, jist to relieve me now an' then, an' I'll mind ye when a's owre; an' at ony rate ye'll aye pick up a mouthfu' o' guid meat and drink—an' that ye ken's no to be fand at every dyke-side."

"A bargain be't," said the stranger, "an' much obliged to you, frien. I maun just tak pat-luck and be thankfu'. But isna your waddin folks lang o' comin?" he added.

"They'll be here belyve," replied Willie, and added, "Ye'll no be blin, frien?"

"Ou no," said the stranger; "thank goodness I hae my sight; but I am otherwise in such a bad state o' health, that

I canna work, and am obliged to tak the fiddle for a subsistence."

While this conversation was going on, the wedding folks were seen dropping out of the manse in twos and threes, and making straight for the scene of the evening's festivities, where they all very soon after assembled. Ample justice having been done to all the good things that were now set before the merry party, and Willie and his colleague having had their share, and being thus put in excellent trim for entering on their labours, the place was cleared of all encumbrances, and a fair and open field left for the dancers. At this stage of the proceedings, Willie was led by his colleague to his station, and helped up to the elevated chair which had been provided for him, when the latter handed him his instrument, while he himself took up his position, fiddle in hand, on his principal's left, but standing on the ground, as there was no room for him on the platform.

Everything being now ready, and the expectant couples ranged in their respective places on the floor, Willie was called upon to begin—an order which he instantly obeyed, by opening in great style.

On the conclusion of the first reel, in the musical department of which the strange fiddler had not interfered, the latter whispered to his coadjutor, that if he liked he would relieve him for the next.

"Weel," replied the latter, "if ye think ye can gae through wi't onything decently, ye may try your hand."

"I'll no promise much," said the stranger, now for the first time drawing his fiddle out of its bag; "but, for the credit o' the craft, I'll do the best I can."

Having said this, Willie's colleague drew his bow across the strings of his fiddle, with a preparatory flourish, when instantly every face in the apartment was turned towards him with an expression of delight and surprise. The tones of the fiddle were so immeasurably superior to those of poor

Willie's salt-box, that the dullest and most indiscriminating ear amongst the revellers readily distinguished the amazing difference. But infinitely greater still was their surprise and delight when the stranger began to play. Nothing could exceed the energy, accuracy, and beauty of his performances. He was, in short, evidently a perfect master of the instrument, and this was instantly perceived and acknowledged by all, including Willie himself, who declared, with great candour and good-will, that he had never heard a better fiddler in his life.

The result of this discovery was, that the former was not allowed to lift a bow during the remainder of the night, the whole burden of its labours being deposited on the shoulders, or perhaps we should rather say the finger-ends, of the stranger, who fiddled away with an apparently invincible elbow.

For several hours the dance went on without interruption, and without any apparent abatement whatever of vigour on the part of the performers; but, at the end of this period some symptoms of exhaustion began to manifest themselves, which were at length fully declared by a temporary cessation of both the mirth and music.

It was at this interval in the revelries that the unknown fiddler—who had been, by the unanimous voice of the party, installed in Willie's elevated chair, while the latter was reduced to his place on the floor—stretching himself over the platform, and tapping Willie on the hat with his bow, to draw his attention, inquired of him, in a whisper, if he knew who the lively little girl was that had been one of the partners in the last reel that had been danced.

"Is she a bit red-cheeked, dark ee'd, and dark-haired lassie, about nineteen or twenty?" inquired Willie, in his turn.

"The same," replied the fiddler.

"Ou, that's Jeanie Harrison," said Willie—"a kind-

hearted, nice bit lassie. No a better nor a bonnier in a' the parish. She's a dochter o' Mr Harrison o' Todshaws, the young couple's maister, an' a very respectable man. He's here himsel, too, amang the lave."

"Just so," replied his colleague. And he began to rosin his bow, and to screw his pegs anew, to prepare for the second storm of merriment, which he saw gathering, and threatening to burst upon him with increased fury. Amongst the first on the floor was Jeanie Harrison.

"Is there naebody 'll tak me out for a reel?" exclaimed the lively girl; and without waiting for an answer—"weel, then, I'll hae the fiddler." And she ran towards the platform on which the unknown performer was seated. But he did not wait her coming. He had heard her name her choice, laid down his fiddle, and sprang to the floor with the agility of a harlequin, exclaiming, "Thank ye, my bonny lassie—thank ye for the honour. I'm your man at a moment's notice, either for feet or fiddle."

It is not quite certain that Jeanie was in perfect earnest when she made choice of the musician for a partner, but it was now too late to retract, for the joke had taken with the company, and, with one voice, or rather shout, they insisted on her keeping faithful to her engagement, and dancing a reel with the fiddler; and on this no one insisted more stoutly than the fiddler himself. Finding that she could do no better, the good-natured girl put the best face on the frolic she could, and prepared to do her partner every justice in the dance. Willie having now taken bow in hand, his colleague gave him the word of command, and away the dancers went like meteors: and here again the surprise of the party was greatly excited by the performances of our friend the fiddler, who danced as well as he played. To say merely that he far surpassed all in the room would not, perhaps, be saying much; for there were none of them very great adepts in the art. But, in truth, he danced with singular

grace and lightness, and much did those who witnessed it marvel at the display. Neither was his bow to his partner, nor his manner of conducting her to her seat on the conclusion of the reel, less remarkable. It was distinguished by an air of refined gallantry certainly not often to be met with in those in his humble station in life. He might have been a master of ceremonies; and where the beggarly-looking fiddler had picked up these accomplishments every one found it difficult to conjecture.

On the termination of the dance, the fiddler—as we shall call him, *par excellence*, and to distinguish him from Willie—resumed his seat and his fiddle, and began to drive away with even more than his former spirit; but it was observed by more than one that his eye was now almost constantly fixed, for the remainder of the evening, as, indeed, it had been very frequently before, on his late partner, Jeanie Harrison. This circumstance, however, did not prevent him giving every satisfaction to those who danced to his music, nor did it in the least impair the spirit of his performances; for he was evidently too much practised in the use of the instrument, which he managed with such consummate skill, to be put out, either by the contemplation of any chance object which might present itself, or by the vagaries of his imagination.

Leaving our musician in the discharge of his duty, we shall step over to where Jeanie Harrison is seated, to learn what she thinks of her partner, and what the Misses Murray, the daughters of a neighbouring farmer, between whom she sat, think of him, and of Jeanie having danced with a fiddler.

Premising that the Misses Murray, not being by any means beauties themselves, entertained a very reasonable and justifiable dislike and jealousy of all their own sex to whom nature had been more bountiful in this particular; and finding, moreover, that, from their excessively bad tempers

(this, however, of course, not admitted by the ladies themselves), they could neither practise nor share in the amenities which usually mark the intercourse of the sexes, they had set up for connoisseurs in the articles of propriety and decorum, of which they professed to be profound judges.

Premising this, then, we proceed to quote the conversation that passed between the three ladies—that is, the Misses Murray and Miss Harrison; the latter taking her seat between them after dancing with the fiddler.

"My certy," exclaimed the elder, with a very dignified toss of the head, "ye warna nice, Jeanie, to dance wi' a fiddler. I wad hae been very ill aff, indeed, for a partner before I wad hae taen up wi' such a ragamuffin."

"An' to go an' ask him too!" said the younger, with an imitative toss. "I wadna ask the best man in the land to dance wi' me, let alane a fiddler! If they dinna choose to come o' their ain accord, they may stay."

"Tuts, lassies, it was a' a piece o' fun," said the good-humoured girl. "I'm sure everybody saw that but yersels. Besides, the man's weel aneugh—na, a gude deal mair than that, if he was only a wee better clad. There's no a better-lookin man in the room; and I wish, lassies," she added, "ye may get as guid dancers in your partners—that's a'."

"Umph! a bonny like taste ye hae, Jeanie, an' a very strange notion o' propriety!" exclaimed the elder, with another toss of the head.

"To dance wi' a fiddler!" simpered out the younger, who, by the way, was no chicken either, being but a trifle on the right side of thirty.

"Ay, to be sure—dance wi' a fiddler or a piper either. I'll dance wi' baith o' them—an' what for no?" replied Jeanie. "There's neither sin nor shame in't; and I'll dance wi' him again, if he'll only but ask me."

"An' faith he'll do that wi' a' the pleasure in the warld, my bonny lassie," quoth the intrepid fiddler, leaping down

once more from his high place; for, there having been a cessation of both music and dancing while the conversation above recorded was going on, he had heard every word of it. —"Wi' a' the pleasure in the warld," he said, advancing towards Jeanie Harrison, and making one of his best bows of invitation; and again a shout of approbation from the company urged Jeanie to accept it, which she readily did, at once to gratify her friends, and to provoke the Misses Murray.

Having accordingly taken her place on the floor, and other couples having been mustered for the set, Jeanie's partner again called on Willie to strike up, again the dancers started, and again the fiddler astonished and delighted the company with the grace and elegance of his performances. On this occasion, however, the unknown musician's predilection for his fair partner exhibited a more unequivocal character; and he even ventured to inquire if he might call at her father's, to amuse the family for an hour or so with his fiddle.

"Nae objection in the warld," replied Jeanie. "Come as aften as ye like; and the aftener the better, if ye only bring yer fiddle wi' ye, for we're a' fond o' music."

"A bargain be't," said the gallant fiddler; and, at the conclusion of the reel, he again resumed his place on the platform and his fiddle.

"Time and the hour," says Shakspere, "will wear through the roughest day;" and so they will, also, through the merriest night, as the joyous party of whom we are speaking now soon found.

Exhaustion and lassitude, though long defied, finally triumphed; and even the very candles seemed wearied of giving light; and, under the influence of these mirth-destroying feelings, the party at length broke up, and all departed, excepting the two fiddlers.

These worthies now adjourned to a public-house, which

was close by, and set very gravely about settling what was to them the serious business of the evening. Willie had received thirty-one shillings, as payment in full for their united labours; and, in consideration of the large and unexpected portion of them which had fallen to the stranger's share, he generously determined, notwithstanding that he was the principal party, as having been the first engaged, to give him precisely the one-half of the money, or fifteen shillings and sixpence.

"Very fair," said the stranger, on this being announced to him by his brother in trade—"very fair; but what would ye think of our drinking the odd sixpences?"

"Wi' a' my heart," replied Willie—"wi' a' my heart. A very guid notion."

And a jug of toddy, to the value of one shilling, was accordingly ordered and produced, over which the two got as thick as ben-leather.

"Ye're a guid fiddler—I'll say that o' ye," quoth Willie, after tossing down the first glass of the warm, exhilarating beverage. "I wad never wish to hear a better."

"I have had some practice," said the other, modestly, and at the same time following his companion's example with his glass.

"Nae doot, nae doot, sae's seen on your playin," replied the latter. "How do you fend wi' your fiddle? Do ye mak onything o' a guid leevin o't?"

"No that ill ava," said the stranger. "I play for the auld leddy at the castle—Castle Gowan, ye ken; indeed, I'm sometimes ca'd the leddy's fiddler, and she's uncommon guid to me. I neither want bite nor sowp when I gang there."

"That's sae far weel," replied Willie. "She's a guid judge o' music that Leddy Gowan, as I hear them say; and I'm tauld her son, Sir John, plays a capital bow."

"No amiss, I believe," said the stranger; "but the leddy,

as ye say, is an excellent judge o' music, although whiles, I think, rather owre fond o't, for she maks me play for hours thegither, when I wad far rather be wi' Tam Yule, her butler, a sonsy, guid-natured chiel, that's no sweer o' the cap. But, speaking o' that, I'll tell ye what, frien," he continued, "if ye'll come up to Castle Gowan ony day, I'll be blithe to see you, for I'm there at least ance every day, and I'll warrant ye—for ye see I can use every liberty there—in a guid het dinner, an' a jug o' hetter toddy to wash it owre wi'."

"A bargain be't," quoth Willie; "will the morn do?"

"Perfectly," said the stranger; "the sooner the better."

This settled, Willie proceeded to a subject which had been for some time near his heart, but which he felt some delicacy in broaching. This feeling, however, having gradually given way before the influence of the toddy, and of his friend's frank and jovial manner, he at length ventured, though cautiously, to step on the ice.

"That's an uncommon guid instrument o' yours, frien," he said.

"Very good," replied his companion, briefly.

"But ye'll hae mair than that ane, nae doot?" rejoined the other.

"I hae ither twa."

"In that case," said Willie, "maybe ye wad hae nae objection to pairt wi' that ane, an the price offered ye wur a' the mair temptin. I'll gie ye the saxteen shillins I hae won the nicht, an' my fiddle, for't."

"Thank ye, frien, thank ye for your offer," replied the stranger; "but I daurna accept o't, though I war willin. The fiddle was gien to me by Leddy Gowan, and I daurna pairt wi't. She wad miss't, and then there wad be the deevil to pay."

"Oh, an that's the case," said Willie, "I'll say nae mair

aboot it; but it's a first-rate fiddle—sae guid a ane, that it micht amaist play the lane o't."

It being now very late, or rather early, and the toddy jug emptied, the blind fiddler and his friend parted, on the understanding, however, that the former would visit the latter at the castle (whither he was now going, he said, to seek a night's quarters) on the following day.

True to his appointment, Willie appeared next day at Gowan House, or Castle Gowan, as it was more generally called, and inquired for "the fiddler." His inquiry was met with great civility and politeness by the footman who opened the door. He was told "the fiddler" was there, and desired to walk in. Obeying the invitation, Willie, conducted by the footman, entered a spacious apartment, where he was soon afterwards entertained with a sumptuous dinner, in which his friend the fiddler joined him.

"My word, neighbour," said Willie, after having made a hearty meal of the good things that were set before him, and having drank in proportion, "but ye're in noble quarters here. This is truly fiddlin to some purpose, an' treatin the art as it ought to be treated in the persons o' its professors. But what," he added, "if Sir John should come in upon us? He wadna like maybe a'thegither to see a stranger wi' ye?"

"Deil a bodle I care for Sir John, Willie! He's but a wild harum-scarum throughither chap at the best, an' no muckle to be heeded."

"Ay, he's fond o' a frolic, they tell me," quoth Willie; "an' there's a heap o' gay queer anes laid to his charge, whether they be true or no; but his heart's in the richt place, I'm thinkin, for a' that. I've heard o' mony guid turns he has dune."

"Ou, he's no a bad chiel, on the whole, I daresay," replied Willie's companion. "His bark's waur than his bite —an' that's mair than can be said o' a rat-trap at ony rate."

It was about this period, and then for the first time, that certain strange and vague suspicions suddenly entered Willie's mind regarding his entertainer. He had remarked that the latter gave his orders with an air of authority which he thought scarcely becoming in one who occupied the humble situation of "the lady's fiddler;" but, singular as this appeared to him, the alacrity and silence with which these orders were obeyed, was to poor Willie still more unaccountable. He said nothing, however; but much did he marvel at the singular good fortune of his brother-in-trade. He had never known a fiddler so quartered before; and, lost in admiration of his friend's felicity, he was about again to express his ideas on the subject, when a servant in splendid livery entered the room, and, bowing respectfully, said, "The carriage waits you, Sir John."

"I will be with you presently, Thomas," replied who? inquires the reader.

Why, Willie's companion!

What! is he then Sir John Gowan—he, the fiddler at the penny-wedding, Sir John Gowan, of Castle Gowan, the most extensive proprietor and the wealthiest man in the county?

The same, and no other, good reader, we assure thee.

A great lover of frolic, as he himself said, was Sir John; and this was one of the pranks in which he delighted. He was an enthusiastic fiddler; and, as has been already shown, performed with singular skill on that most difficult, but most delightful, of all musical instruments.

We will not attempt to describe poor Willie's amazement and confusion, when this singular fact became known to him; for they are indescribable, and therefore better left to the reader's imagination. On recovering a little from his surprise, however, he endeavoured to express his astonishment in such broken sentences as these—"Wha in earth wad hae ever dreamed o't? Rosit an' fiddle-strings!—this

beats a'. Faith, an' I've been fairly taen in—clean dune for. A knight o' the shire to play at a penny-waddin wi' blin Willie Hodge, the fiddler! The like was ne'er heard tell o'."

As it is unnecessary, and would certainly be tedious, to protract the scene at this particular point in our story, we cut it short by saying, that Sir John presented Willie with the fiddle he had so much coveted, and which he had vainly endeavoured to purchase; that he then told down to him the half of the proceeds of the previous night's labours which he had pocketed, added a handsome *douceur* from his own purse, and finally dismissed him with a pressing and cordial invitation to visit the castle as often as it suited his inclination and conveniency.

Having arrived at this landing-place in our tale, we pause to explain one or two things, which is necessary for the full elucidation of the sequel. With regard to Sir John Gowan himself, there is little to add to what has been already said of him; for, brief though these notices of him are, they contain nearly all that the reader need care to know about him. He was addicted to such pranks as that just recorded; but this, if it was a defect in his character, was the only one. For the rest, he was an excellent young man—kind, generous, and affable, of the strictest honour, and the most upright principles. He was, moreover, an exceedingly handsome man, and highly accomplished. At this period, he was unmarried, and lived with his mother, Lady Gowan, to whom he was most affectionately attached. Sir John had, at one time, mingled a good deal with the fashionable society of the metropolis; but soon became disgusted with the heartlessness of those who composed it, and with the frivolity of their pursuits; and in this frame of mind he came to the resolution of retiring to his estate, and of giving himself up entirely to the quiet enjoyments of a country life, and the pleasing duties which his position as a large landed proprietor entailed upon him.

Simple in all his tastes and habits, Sir John had been unable to discover, in any of the manufactured beauties to whom he had been, from time to time, introduced while he resided in London, one to whom he could think of intrusting his happiness. The wife he desired was one fresh from the hand of nature, not one remodelled by the square and rule of art; and such a one he thought he had found during his adventure of the previous night.

Bringing this digression, which we may liken to an interlude, to a close, we again draw up the curtain, and open the second act of our little drama with an exhibition of the residence of Mr Harrison at Todshaw.

The house or farm-steading of this worthy person was of the very best description of such establishments. The building itself was substantial, nay, even handsome, while the excellent garden which was attached to it, and all the other accessories and appurtenances with which it was surrounded, indicated wealth and comfort. Its situation was on the summit of a gentle eminence that sloped down in front to a noisy little rivulet, that careered along through a narrow rugged glen overhanging with hazel, till it came nearly opposite the house, where it wound through an open plat of green sward, and shortly after again plunged into another little romantic ravine similar to the one it had left.

The approach to Mr Harrison's house lay along this little rivulet, and was commanded, for a considerable distance, by the view from the former—a circumstance which enabled Jeanie Harrison to descry, one fine summer afternoon, two or three days after the occurrence of the events just related, the approach of the fiddler with whom she had danced at the wedding. On making this discovery, Jeanie ran to announce the joyful intelligence to all the other members of the family, and the prospect of a merry dancing afternoon opened on the delighted eyes of its younger branches.

When the fiddler—with whose identity the reader is now

as well acquainted as we are—had reached the bottom of the ascent that led to the house, Jeanie, with excessive joy beaming in her bright and expressive eye, and her cheek glowing with the roseate hues of health, rushed down to meet him, and to welcome him to Todshaw.

"Thank ye, my bonny lassie—thank ye," replied the disguised baronet, expressing himself in character, and speaking the language of his assumed station. "Are ye ready for anither dance?"

"Oh, a score o' them—a thousand o' them," said the lively girl.

"But will your faither, think ye, hae nae objections to my comin?" inquired the fiddler.

"Nane in the warld. My faither is nane o' your sour carles that wad deny ither folk the pleasures they canna enjoy themsels. He likes to see a'body happy around him—every ane his ain way."

"An' your mother?"

"Jist the same. Ye'll find her waur to fiddle doun than ony o' us. She'll dance as lang's a string hauds o't."

"Then, I may be quite at my ease," rejoined Sir John.

"Quite so," replied Jeanie—and she slipped half-a-crown into his hand—"and there's your arles; but ye'll be minded better ere ye leave us."

"My word, no an ill beginnin," quoth the musician, looking with well-affected delight at the coin, and afterwards putting it carefully into his pocket. "But ye could hae gien me a far mair acceptable arles than half-a-crown," he added, "and no been a penny the poorer either."

"What's that?" said Jeanie, laughing and blushing at the same time, and more than half guessing, from the looks of the *pawky* fiddler, what was meant.

"Why, my bonny leddie," he replied, "jist a kiss o' that pretty little mou o' yours."

"Oh, ye gowk!" exclaimed Jeanie, with a roguish glance

at her humble gallant; for, disguised as he was, he was not able to conceal a very handsome person, nor the very agreeable expression of a set of remarkably fine features—qualities which did not escape the vigilance of the female eye that was now scanning their possessor. Nor would we say that these qualities were viewed with total indifference, or without producing their effect, even although they did belong to a fiddler.

"Oh, ye gowk!" said Jeanie; "wha ever heard o' a fiddler preferring a kiss to half-a-crown?"

"But *I* do, though," replied the disguised knight; "and I'll gie ye yours back again for't."

"The mair fule you," exclaimed Jeanie, rushing away towards the house, and leaving the fiddler to make out the remainder of the way by himself.

On reaching the house, the musician was ushered into the kitchen, where a plentiful repast was instantly set before him, by the kind and considerate hospitality of Jeanie, who, not contented with her guest's making a hearty meal at table, insisted on his pocketing certain pieces of cheese, cold meat, &c., which were left. These the fiddler steadily refused; but Jeanie would take no denial, and with her own hands crammed them into his capacious pockets, which, after the operation, stuck out like a well-filled pair of saddle-bags. But there was no need for any one who might be curious to know what they contained, to look into them for that purpose. Certain projecting bones of mutton and beef, which it was found impossible to get altogether out of sight, sufficiently indicated their contents. Of this particular circumstance, however—we mean the projection of the bones from the pockets—we must observe, the owner of the said pockets was not aware, otherwise, we daresay, he would have been a little more positive in rejecting the provender which Jeanie's warmheartedness and benevolence had forced upon him.

Be this as it may, however, so soon as the musician had finished his repast, he took fiddle in hand, and opened the evening with a slow pathetic Scottish air, which he played so exquisitely that Jeanie's eye filled with a tear, as she listened in raptures to the sweet but melancholy turns of the affecting tune.

Twice the musician played over the touching strain, delighted to perceive the effects of the music on the lovely girl who stood before him, and rightly conceiving it to be an unequivocal proof of a susceptible heart and of a generous nature.

A third time he began the beautiful air; but he now accompanied it with a song, and in this accomplishment he was no less perfect than in the others which have been already attributed to him. His voice was at once manly and melodious, and he conducted it with a skill that did it every justice. Having played two or three bars of the tune, his rich and well-regulated voice chimed in with the following words:—

"Oh, I hae lived wi' high-bred dames,
  Each state of life to prove,
But never till this hour hae met
  The girl that I could love.

It's no in fashion's gilded ha's
  That she is to be seen;
Beneath her father's humble roof
  Abides my bonny Jean.

Oh, wad she deign ae thought to wair,
  Ae kindly thought on me,
Wi' pearls I wad deck her hair,
  Though low be my degree.

Wi' pearls I wad deck her hair,
  Wi' gowd her wrists sae sma';
An' had I lands and houses, she'd
  Be leddy owre them a'.

The sun abune's no what he seems,
Nor is the night's fair queen;
Then wha kens wha the minstrel is
That's wooin bonny Jean?"

Jeanie could not help feeling a little strange as the minstrel proceeded with a song which seemed to have so close a reference to herself.

She, of course, did not consider this circumstance otherwise than as merely accidental; but she could not help, nevertheless, being somewhat embarrassed by it; and this was made sufficiently evident by the blush that mantled on her cheek, and by the confusion of her manner under the fixed gaze of the singer, while repeating the verses just quoted.

When he had concluded, "Well, good folks all," he said, "what think ye of my song?" And without waiting for an answer, about which he seemed very indifferent, he added, "and how do you like it, Jeanie?" directing the question exclusively to the party he named.

"Very weel," replied Jeanie, again blushing, but still more deeply than before; "the song is pretty, an' the air delightfu'; but some o' the verses are riddles to me. I dinna thoroughly understan them."

"Don't you?" replied Sir John, laughing; "then I'll explain them to you by and by; but, in the meantime, I must screw my pegs anew, and work for my dinner, for I see the good folk about me here are all impatience to begin." A fact this which was instantly acknowledged by a dozen voices; and straightway the whole party proceeded, in compliance with a suggestion of Mr Harrison, to the green in front of the house, where Sir John took up his position on the top of an inverted wheelbarrow, and immediately commenced his labours.

For several hours, the dance went on with uninterrupted glee; old Mr Harrison and his wife appearing to enjoy the

sport as much as the youngest of the party, and both being delighted with the masterly playing of the musician. But, although, as on a former occasion, Sir John did not suffer anything to interfere with or interrupt the charge of the duties expected of him, there was but a very small portion of his mind or thoughts engrossed by the employment in which he was engaged. All, or nearly all, were directed to the contemplation of the object on which his affections had now become irrevocably fixed.

Neither was his visit to Todshaws, on this occasion, by any means dictated solely by the frivolous object of affording its inmates entertainment by his musical talents. His purpose was a much more serious one. It was to ascertain, as far as such an opportunity would afford him the means, the dispositions and temper of his fair enslaver. Of these, his natural shrewdness had enabled him to make a pretty correct estimate on the night of the wedding; but he was desirous of seeing her in other circumstances, and he thought none more suitable for his purpose than those of a domestic nature.

It was, then, to see her in this position that he had now come; and the result of his observations was highly gratifying to him.

He found in Miss Harrison all that he, at any rate, desired in woman. He found her guileless, cheerful, gentle, kind-hearted, and good-tempered, beloved by all around her, and returning the affection bestowed on her with a sincere and ardent love.

Such were the discoveries which the disguised baronet made on this occasion; and never did hidden treasure half so much gladden the heart of the fortunate finder as these did that of him who made them. It is true that Sir John could not be sure, nor was he, that his addresses would be received by Miss Harrison, even after he should have made himself known; but he could not help entertaining a pretty strong

confidence in his own powers of persuasion, nor being, consequently, tolerably sanguine of success. All this, however, was to be the work of another day. In the meantime, the dancers having had their hearts' content of capering on the green sward, the fiddle was put up, and the fiddler once more invited into the house, where he was entertained with the same hospitality as before, and another half-crown slipped into his hand. This he also put carefully into his pocket; and having partaken lightly of what was set before him, rose up to depart, alleging that he had a good way to go, and was desirous of availing himself of the little daylight that still remained. He was pressed to remain all night, but this he declined; promising, however, in reply to the urgent entreaties with which he was assailed on all sides to stay, that he would very soon repeat his visit. Miss Harrison he took by the hand, and said, "I promised to explain to you the poetical riddle which I read, or rather attempted to sing, this evening. It is now too late to do this, for the explanation is a long one; but I will be here again, without fail, in a day or two, when I shall solve all, and, I trust, to your satisfaction. Till then, do not forget your poor fiddler."

"No, I winna forget ye," said Jeanie. "It wadna be easy to forget ane that has contributed so much to our happiness. Neither would it be more than gratefu' to do so, I think."

"And you are too kind a creature to be ungrateful to any one, however humble may be their attempts to win your favour—of that I feel assured." Having said this, and perceiving that he was unobserved, he quickly raised the fair hand he held to his lips, kissed it, and hurried out of the door.

What Jane Harrison thought of this piece of gallantry from a fiddler, we really do not know, and therefore will say nothing about it. Whatever her thoughts were, she

kept them to herself. Neither did she mention to any one the circumstance which gave rise to them. Nor did she say, but for what reason we are ignorant, how much she had been pleased with the general manners of the humble musician—with the melodious tones of his voice, and the fine expression of his dark hazel eye. Oh, love, love! thou art a leveller, indeed, else how should it happen that the pretty daughter of a wealthy and respectable yeoman should think for a moment, with certain indescribable feelings, of a poor itinerant fiddler? Mark, good reader, however, we do not say that Miss Harrison was absolutely in love with the musician. By no means. That would certainly be saying too much. But it is as certainly true, that she had perceived something about him that left no disagreeable impression—nay, something which she wished she might meet with in her future husband, whoever he might be.

Leaving Jeanie Harrison to such reflections as these, we will follow the footsteps of the disguised baronet. On leaving the house, he walked at a rapid pace for an hour or so, till he came to a turn in the road, at the distance of about four miles from Todshaws, where his gig and man-servant, with a change of clothes, were waiting him by appointment. Having hastily divested himself of his disguise, and resumed his own dress, he stepped into the vehicle, and about midnight arrived at Castle Gowan.

In this romantic attachment of Sir John Gowan's—or rather in the romantic project which it suggested to him of offering his heart and hand to the daughter of a humble farmer—there was but one doubtful point on his side of the question, at any rate. This was, whether he could obtain the consent of his mother to such a proceeding. She loved him with the utmost tenderness; and, naturally of a mild, gentle, and affectionate disposition, her sole delight lay in promoting the happiness of her beloved son. To secure this great object of her life, there was scarcely any sacrifice

which she would not make, nor any proposal with which she would not willingly comply. This Sir John well knew, and fully appreciated; but he felt that the call which he was now about to make on her maternal love was more than he ought to expect she would answer. He, in short, felt that she might, with good reason, and without the slightest infringement of her regard for him, object to his marrying so far beneath his station. It was not, therefore, without some misgivings that he entered his mother's private apartment on the day following his adventure at Todshaws, for the purpose of divulging the secret of his attachment, and hinting at the resolution he had formed regarding it.

"Mother," he said, after a pause which had been preceded by the usual affectionate inquiries of the morning, "you have often expressed a wish that I would marry."

"I have, John," replied the good old lady. "Nothing in this world would afford me greater gratification than to see you united to a woman who should be every way deserving of you—one with whom you could live happily."

"Ay, that last is the great, the important consideration, at least with me. But where, mother, am I to find that woman? I have mingled a good deal with the higher ranks of society, and there, certainly, I have not been able to find her. I am not so uncharitable as to say—nay, God forbid I should—that there are not as good, as virtuous, as amiable women, in the upper classes of society as in the lower. I have no doubt there are. All that I mean to say is, that I have not been fortunate enough to find one in that sphere to suit my fancy, and have no hopes of ever doing so. Besides, the feelings, sentiments, and dispositions of these persons, both male and female, are so completely disguised by a factitious manner, and by conventional rules, that you never can discover what is their real nature and character. They are still strangers to you, however long you may be acquainted with

them. You cannot tell who or what they are. The roller of fashion reduces them all to one level; and, being all clapped into the same mould, they become mere repetitions of each other, as like as peas, without exhibiting the slightest point of variety. Now, mother," continued Sir John, "the wife I should like is one whose heart, whose inmost nature, should be at once open to my view, unwarped and undisguised by the customs and fashions of the world."

"Upon my word, John, you are more than usually eloquent this morning," said Lady Gowan, laughing. "But pray now, do tell me, John, shortly and unequivocally, what is the drift of this long, flowery, and very sensible speech of yours?—for that there is a drift in it I can clearly perceive. You are aiming at something which you do not like to plump upon me at once."

Sir John looked a good deal confused on finding that his mother's shrewdness had detected a latent purpose in his remarks, and endeavoured to evade the acknowledgment of that purpose, until he should have her opinion of the observations he had made; and in this he succeeded. Having pressed her on this point:

"Well, my son," replied Lady Gowan, "if you think that you cannot find a woman in a station of life corresponding to your own that will suit your taste, look for her in any other you please; and, when found, take her. Consult your own happiness, John, and in doing so you will consult mine. I will not object to your marrying whomsoever you please. All that I bargain for is, that she be a perfectly virtuous woman, and of irreproachable character; and I don't think this is being unreasonable. But do now, John, tell me at once," she added, in a graver tone, and taking her son solemnly by the hand; "have you fixed your affections on a woman of humble birth and station? I rather suspect this is the case."

"I have, then, mother," replied Sir John, returning his

mother's expressive and affectionate pressure of the hand—"the daughter of a humble yeoman, a woman who ——" But we will spare the reader the infliction of the high-flown encomiums of all sorts which Sir John lavished on the object of his affections. Suffice it to say, that they included every quality of both mind and person which go to the adornment of the female sex.

When he had concluded, Lady Gowan, who made the necessary abatements from the panegyric her son had passed on the lady of his choice, said that, with regard to his attachment, she could indeed have wished it had fallen on one somewhat nearer his own station in life, but that, nevertheless, she had no objection whatever to accept of Miss Harrison as a daughter-in-law, since she was his choice. "Nay," she added, smiling, "if she only possesses one-tenth—ay, one-tenth, John—of the good qualities with which you have endowed her, I must say you are a singularly fortunate man to have fallen in with such a treasure. But, John, allow me to say that, old woman as I am, I think that I could very easily show you that your prejudices, vulgar prejudices I must call them, against the higher classes of society, are unreasonable, unjust, and, I would add, illiberal, and therefore wholly unworthy of you. Does the elegance, the refinement, the accomplishments, the propriety of manner and delicacy of sentiment, to be met with in these circles, go for nothing with you? Does ——"

"My dear mother," here burst in Sir John, "if you please, we will not argue the point; for, in truth, I do not feel disposed just now to argue about anything. I presume I am to understand, my ever kind and indulgent parent, that I have your full consent to marry Miss Harrison—that is, of course, if Miss Harrison will marry me."

"Fully and freely, my child," said the old lady, now flinging her arms around her son's neck, while a tear glistened in her eye; "and may God bless your union, and make it

happy! I would rather ten thousand times see you marry such a girl as you have described, than that you should do by her as many young men of your years and station would be but too ready to do."

Sir John with no less emotion returned the embrace of his affectionate parent, and, in the most grateful language he could command, thanked her for her ready compliance with his wishes.

On the day following that on which the preceding conversation between Sir John Gowan and his mother took place, the inmates of Todshaws were surprised at the appearance of a splendid equipage driving up towards the house.

"Wha in a' the world's this?" said Jeanie to her father, as they both stood at the door, looking at the glittering vehicle, as it flashed in the sun and rolled on towards them. "Some travellers that hae mistaen their road."

"Very likely," replied her father; "yet I canna understand what kind o' a mistake it could be that should bring them to such an out-o'-the-way place as this. It's no a regular carriage road—that they micht hae seen; an' if they hae gane wrang, they'll find some difficulty in getting richt again. But here they are, sae we'll sune ken a' about it."

As Mr Harrison said this, the carriage, now at the distance of only some twenty or thirty yards from the house, stopped, a gentleman stepped out, and advanced smiling towards Mr Harrison and his daughter. They looked surprised, nay confounded; for they could not at all comprehend who their visiter was.

"How do you do, Mr Harrison?" exclaimed the latter, stretching out his hand to the person he addressed; "and how do you do, Miss Harrison?" he said, taking Jeanie next by the hand.

In the stranger's tones and manner the acute perceptions

of Miss Harrison recognised something she had heard and seen before, and the recognition greatly perplexed her; nor was this perplexity lessened by the discovery which she also made, that the countenance of the stranger recalled one which she had seen on some former occasion. In short, the person now before her she thought presented a most extraordinary likeness to the fiddler—only that he had no fiddle, that he was infinitely better dressed, and that his pockets were not sticking out with lumps of cheese and cold beef. That they were the same person, however, she never dreamed for a moment.

In his daughter's perplexity on account of the resemblances alluded to, Mr Harrison did not participate, as, having paid little or no attention to the personal appearance of the fiddler, he detected none of them; and it was thus that he replied to the stranger's courtesies with a gravity and coolness which contrasted strangely with the evident embarrassment and confusion of his daughter, although she herself did not well know how this accidental resemblance, as she deemed it, should have had such an effect upon her.

Immediately after the interchange of the commonplace civilities above-mentioned had passed between the stranger and Mr Harrison and his daughter—

"Mr Harrison," he said, "may I have a private word with you?"

"Certainly, sir," replied the former. And he led the way into a little back parlour.

"Excuse us for a few minutes, Miss Harrison," said the stranger, with a smile, ere he followed, and bowing gallantly to her as he spoke.

On entering the parlour, Mr Harrison requested the stranger to take a seat, and placing himself in another, he awaited the communication of his visiter.

"Mr Harrison," now began the latter, "in the first place,

it may be proper to inform you that I am Sir John Gowan of Castle Gowan."

"Oh!" said Mr Harrison, rising from his seat, approaching Sir John, and extending his hand towards him—"I am very happy indeed to see Sir John Gowan. I never had the pleasure of seeing you before, sir; but I have heard much of you, and not to your discredit, I assure you, Sir John."

"Well, that is some satisfaction, at any rate, Mr Harrison," replied the baronet, laughing. "I am glad that my character, since it happens to be a good one, has been before me. It may be of service to me. But to proceed to business. You will hardly recognise in me, my friend, I daresay," continued Sir John, "a certain fiddler who played to you at a certain wedding lately, and to whose music you and your family danced on the green in front of your own house the other night."

Mr Harrison's first reply to this extraordinary observation was a broad stare of amazement and utter non-comprehension. But after a few minutes' pause thus employed, "No, certainly not, sir," he said, still greatly perplexed and amazed. "But I do not understand you. What is it you mean, Sir John?"

"Why," replied the latter, laughing, "I mean very distinctly that *I* was the musician on both of the occasions alluded to. The personification of such a character has been one of my favourite frolics; and, however foolish it may be considered, I trust it will at least be allowed to have been a harmless one."

"Well, this is most extraordinary," replied Mr Harrison, in great astonishment. "Can it be possible? Is it really true, Sir John, or are ye jesting?"

"Not a bit of that, I assure you, sir. I am in sober earnest. But all this," continued Sir John, "is but a prelude to the business I came upon. To be short, then, Mr Harri-

son, I saw and particularly marked your daughter on the two occasions alluded to, and the result, in few words, is, that I have conceived a very strong attachment to her. Her beauty, her cheerfulness, her good temper, and simplicity, have won my heart, and I have now come to offer her my hand."

"Why, Sir John, this — this," stammered out the astonished farmer, "is more extraordinary still. You do my daughter and myself great honour, Sir John—great honour, indeed."

"Not a word of that," replied the knight—"not a word of that, Mr Harrison. My motives are selfish. I am studying my own happiness, and therefore am not entitled to any acknowledgments of that kind. You, I hope, sir, have no objection to accept of me as a son-in-law; and I trust your daughter will have no very serious ones either. Her affections, I hope, are not pre-engaged?"

"Not that I know of, Sir John," replied Mr Harrison; "indeed, I may venture to say positively that they are not. The girl has never yet, that I am aware of, thought of a husband — at least, not more than young women usually do; and as to my having any objections, Sir John, so far from that, I feel, I assure you, extremely grateful for such a singular mark of your favour and condescension as that you have just mentioned."

"And you anticipate no very formidable ones on the part of your daughter?"

"Certainly not, Sir John; it is impossible there should."

"Will you, then, my dear sir," added Sir John, "be kind enough to go to Miss Harrison and break this matter to her, and I will wait your return?"

With this request the farmer instantly complied; and having found his daughter, opened to her at once the extraordinary commission with which he was charged. We would fain describe, but find ourselves wholly incompetent to the

task, the effect which Mr Harrison's communication had upon his daughter, and on the other female members of the family, to all of whom it was also soon known. There was screaming, shouting, laughing, crying, fear, joy, terror, and amazement, all blended together in one tremendous medley, and so loud, that it reached the ears of Sir John himself, who, guessing the cause of it, laughed very heartily at the strange uproar.

"But, oh! the cauld beef an' the cheese that I crammed into his pockets, father," exclaimed Jeanie, running about the room in great agitation. "He'll never forgie me that —never, never," she said, in great distress of mind. "To fill a knight's pockets wi' dauds o' beef and cheese! Oh! goodness, goodness! I canna marry him. I canna see him after that. It's impossible, father—impossible, impossible!"

"If that be a' your objections, Jeanie," replied her father, smiling, "we'll soon get the better o't. I'll undertake to procure ye Sir John's forgiveness for the cauld beef an' cheese—that's if ye think it necessary to ask a man's pardon for filling his pockets wi' most unexceptionable provender. I wish every honest man's pouches war as weel lined, lassie, as Sir John's was that nicht." Saying this, Mr Harrison returned to Sir John and informed him of the result of his mission, which was—but this he had rather made out than been told, for Jeanie could not be brought to give any rational answer at all—that his addresses would not, he believed, be disagreeable to his daughter, "which," he added, "is, I suppose, all that you desire in the meantime, Sir John."

"Nothing more, nothing more, Mr Harrison; she that's not worth wooing's not worth winning. I only desired your consent to my addresses, and a regular and honourable introduction to your daughter. The rest belongs to me. I will now fight my own battle, since you have cleared the way, and only desire that you may wish me success."

"That I do with all my heart," replied the farmer; "and, if I can lend you a hand, I will do it with right good will."

"Thank you, Mr Harrison, thank you," replied Sir John; "and now, my dear sir," he continued, "since you have so kindly assisted me thus far, will you be good enough to help me just one step further. Will you now introduce me in my new character to your daughter? Hitherto, she has known me only," he said, smiling as he spoke, "as an itinerant fiddler, and I long to meet her on a more serious footing—and on one," he added, again laughing, "I hope, a trifle more respectable."

"That I'll very willingly do, Sir John," replied Mr Harrison, smiling in his turn; "but I must tell you plainly, that I have some doubts of being able to prevail on Jane to meet you at this particular moment. She has one most serious objection to seeing you."

"Indeed," replied Sir John, with an earnestness that betokened some alarm. "Pray, what is that objection?"

"Why, sir," rejoined the latter, "allow me to reply to that question by asking you another. Have you any recollection of carrying away out of my house, on the last night you were here, a pocketful of cheese and cold beef?"

"Oh! perfectly, perfectly," said Sir John, laughing, yet somewhat perplexed. "Miss Harrison was kind enough to furnish me with the very liberal supply of the articles you allude to; cramming them into my pocket with her own fair hands."

"Just so," replied Mr Harrison, now laughing in his turn. "Well, then, to tell you a truth, Sir John, Jane is so dreadfully ashamed of that circumstance that she positively will not face you."

"Oh ho! is that the affair?" exclaimed the delighted baronet. "Why, then, if she won't come to us, we'll go to her; so lead the way, Mr Harrison, if you please." Mr Harrison did lead the way, and Jane was caught.

Beyond this point our story need not be prolonged, as here all its interest ceases. We have only now to add, then, that the winning manners, gentle dispositions, and very elegant person of Sir John Gowan, very soon completed the conquest he aimed at; and Jeanie Harrison, in due time, became LADY GOWAN.

THE AMATEUR LAWYERS.*

THE profession of the law is one of the highest respectability; the study itself a sufficiently interesting one, nevertheless of its having been called dry by those whose genius it does not suit, or by those whose pockets have been made lighter by some of its technical behests; yet we cannot conceive what there is, either in its language, its technicalities, or its general practical operation, or its application, to captivate the fancy of any one not connected with it professionally. But, of a surety, the science has had many amateur attachés—men whose whole souls were wrapped up in multiplepoindings, who loved summonses, who were captivated by condescendences. Strange customers for the most part—original geniuses in some of the queerest senses of the word. Born with a natural propensity for litigation, possessed of a most unaccountable aptitude for everything that is complicated and involved, the law becomes with these persons, not only a favourite, but an engrossing study—engrossing almost to the exclusion of everything else. Law, in short, becomes their hobby. Of law they constantly speak; of law they constantly think; of law, we have no doubt, they constantly dream. The victims of this curious disease—for dis-

* One of the characters of this tale may be easily recognised by some of the older Edinburgh agents. It has been said of him, that one day a travelling packman was seen to enter his farmhouse with a large book under his arm, and in about a quarter-of-an-hour afterwards to issue with a book of a very different appearance. The farmer had "swapt" his family Bible for Erskine's "Institute of the Law of Scotland." From that day he became litigious, and from that day he could date the commencement of his ruin.—ED.

ease it is—are generally to be found amongst the lower and uneducated classes, and are, for the most part, men of confused intellect and large conceit, all of them, without any exception, imagining themselves astonishingly acute, shrewd, and clever fellows—sharp chaps, who know much more than the world is aware of, or will give them credit for—screws for bungs of any dimensions—dungeons of wit and wisdom. For these persons the jargon of the law has charms superior to the sweetest strains that music ever poured forth. They delight in its uncouthness and unintelligibility, employ it with a gravity, composure, and confidence which, when contrasted with their utter ignorance, or, at best, confused notions of its meaning, is at once highly edifying and impressive.

Yet, notwithstanding of the natural tendencies of such persons to legal pursuits and studies, they do not generally betake themselves to them spontaneously, or without some original influencing cause. They will be found, for the most part, to have been started in their legal career by some small lawsuit of their own, and, being previously predisposed, this at once inoculates them with the disease. From that moment to the end of their natural lives they are confirmed, incorrigible lawyers. They have imbibed a love for the science, a taste for litigation, which quits them only with life. All which remarks we have made with the view of introducing to the world, with the grandest effect possible, our very good friend, Mr John Goodale, or, as the name was more generally and more euphoniously pronounced by his acquaintances, Guidyill, who was precisely such a person and character as we have endeavoured to picture forth in this preliminary sketch with which our story opens.

Guidyill was a small laird or landed proprietor in the shire of Renfrew, or, as it was anciently spelled, Arranthrough. He was a man of grave, solemn demeanour, with a look of

intense wisdom, which was hardly made good by either his speech or his actions. It was evident that he was desirous of palming himself on a simple world for a man of shining parts, of great penetration and discernment, and profound knowledge. All this he himself firmly believed he was, and this belief imparted to his somewhat saturnine countenance a degree of calm repose, confidence, and self-reliance particularly striking. In person, he was tall and thin, or rather gaunt, with that peculiar conformation of face which has obtained the fancy name of lantern-jawed. His age was about fifty-five. To descend to items: the laird *always* wore knee-breeches, and *never* wore braces; so that the natural tendency of the former downwards being thus unchecked, gave free egress to a quantity of linen, which, taking advantage of the liberty, always displayed itself in a voluminous semicircle of white across his midriff. A small, unnecessary exhibition of snuff about the nose completed the *tout ensemble* of the Laird of Scouthercakes.

We have described Mr Guidyill (we prefer the colloquial to the classical pronunciation of his name) as a small laird, and such he was at the period we take up his history; but it had not been always so with him. He was at one time the owner of a very extensive property; but lawsuit after lawsuit had gradually circumscribed its dimensions, until he found no difficulty in accomplishing that in ten minutes which used to take him a good hour—that is, in walking round his possessions. Yet the laird had still a little left—as much as would carry him through two or three other suits of moderate cost; and this happiness he hoped to enjoy before he died; for, like a spaniel with its master, the more the law flogged him, the more attached he became to the said law.

Just at the particular moment at which we introduce Mr Guidyill to the notice of the reader, he had no legal business whatever on hand—not a single case in any one even

of the petty local courts of the district, to say nothing of his great field of action, the Court of Session. It was a predicament he had not been in for twenty years before, and he found it exceedingly irksome and disagreeable; for a dispute with some one or other was necessary, if not to his existence absolutely, at least most certainly to his happiness. The laird's last lawsuit, which was with a neighbouring proprietor regarding the site of a midden or dungstead, and which, as usual, had gone against him, to the tune of some hundred and eighty pounds, had been brought to a conclusion about a year and a-half before the period we allude to; and, during all that time, the laird had lived contrived to live, we should have said, without a single quarrel with any one on which any pretext for a law-plea could be grounded. Moreover, and what was still more distressing, he was not only without a case at the moment, but without the prospect of one; for he had exhausted all the pugnacity that was in his vicinity. There was not now one left who would "take him up." But better days were in store for the Laird of Scouthercakes—better than he had dared to hope for. One thumping plea, a thorough cleaner out before he died, was the secret wish of his heart, though unavowed even to himself; and in this wish it was permitted him to be gratified.

Now, about the period to which we refer, there came a new tenant to the farm of Skimclean, which farm marched with the remnant of Mr Guidyill's property. For some days after this person, whose name was Drumwhussle, had taken possession of his new farm, the laird kept a sharp look-out on his proceedings, in the hope that he would commit some trespass or other, or perpetrate some encroachment, which would afford standing-room for a quarrel; but, to the great disappointment of our amateur lawyer, no such occurrence took place. In no single thing did, or would, Skimclean offend. No; Skimclean would not throw

even a stick on his neighbour's grounds, of whose exact lines of demarcation he seemed to have a most provokingly accurate knowledge. Losing all hope of his new neighbour's giving any offence spontaneously—that is, through ignorance, or involuntarily, or purposely, or in any way—Scouthercakes determined on visiting him, in the desperate expectation that an acquaintanceship might throw up something to quarrel with—that familiarity might breed, not contempt, but dislike—that friendship might give rise to enmity. This conduct of the laird's certainly seems at first sight paradoxical; but a little reflection, especially if accompanied also by a little experience of the world, will show that it was not quite so absurd or so contradictory as it seems. On the contrary, such reflections and experience would discover, in the laird's intended proceeding, a good deal of philosophy, and a very considerable knowledge of human nature. Be this as it may, Mr Guidyill determined on paying his new neighbour, Skimclean, a visit; and this determination he forthwith executed. The latter, whom he had never had the pleasure of seeing before, he found to be a little, lively, volatile person, of great volubility of speech; like himself, a prodigious snuffer; and like himself, too, possessed of a very comfortable opinion of his own knowledge and abilities. In another and still more remarkable point in character they resembled each other closely. This last resemblance involved a rather singular and certainly curious coincidence between the dispositions of the two worthies, and one which the laird, when he discovered it, viewed with a very strange mixture of feelings. What these were, and what was their cause, will be best left to appear in the progress of our narrative.

On Mr Guidyill's having introduced himself to his new neighbour, and after a little desultory conversation on various subjects had taken place, but chiefly on the merits and demerits of the lands of Skimclean—

"Mr Drumwhussle," said the laird, planting his stick in the ground before him, and looking with deep interest on some trees that grew in front of Skimclean's house, "it's my opinion that ye ocht to cut down thae sticks. They shut oot yer licht terribly, man, and tak up a great deal o' valuable grun."

"Ah, ha, laird, catch me there," replied Drumwhussle, with a knowing laugh. "The trees do a' the mischief ye say; but, do ye no ken, that, being but a tenant, I hae nae richt to cut them, my power being only owre the surface, and that, if I did cut them, I wad be liable to an action o' damages by the laird, wha wad inevitably recover accordin to law. A' tacks, ye ken, are granted, '*propter koorum et kultoorum*'* (ye'll perceive the Latin), an' the fellin o' trees, without consent o' the proprietor, wad be a direck violation. Na, na, I ken better how to keep my feet out o' thae law traps than that, laird."

We wish we could describe the look of amazement with which the laird listened to this extraordinary outpouring of law and Latin—this flourishing of his own weapons in his face. He was perfectly confounded with it. It was a thing so wholly unexpected and unlooked for, to meet with so accomplished a lawyer as Drumwhussle seemed to be in one of his own class and standing, that it was some time before he could say another word on any subject whatever. He was evidently struck with a feeling of mingled respect and awe for his learned neighbour, who, he perceived, had decidedly the advantage of him in the article, Latin—this being a language with which the laird was not at all conversant. Another consideration occurred to the laird, even in the moment of his first surprise. This was, that, should a difference arise between them, he had found in his new neighbour a foeman worthy of his steel; and that, should they remain friends, they might be of service to each other as legal advisers.

* Propter curam et culturam.

In the meantime, the "interlockitor," as the laird would have called the series of legal sentiments which Drumwhussle had just delivered, was far beyond the reach of his comprehension. He did not understand a word of it, and neither could anybody else, we suspect; but, careful of exposing his ignorance—

"Aweel, Skimclean," he said, looking very gravely, "I'm no sure but ye're richt, and it may be as weel, after a', to let the trees stan whar they are; but there's a bit land there," pointing to a patch of about an acre and a-half, which lay low on the side of a small stream, "that I wadna advise ye to crap; for there's no a year that it's no three months under water."

"Ah ha, laird, but that's a *pluskum*,"* replied the vivacious and acute Skimclean; "a case whar the owner o' the land is liable to the extent, at ony rate, o' remittin a year's rent. It's a *pluskum*, laird—that's Latin," added Skimclean, who always gave such intimation to his auditors when he employed that language; from a shrewd suspicion, probably, that it would not otherwise be readily recognised in the very peculiar shape in which he presented it.

"Aweel, I daur say ye're no far wrang there either," replied the laird, now perfectly overwhelmed with the legal knowledge of his new neighbour. "I daur say ye're no far wrang there either, but it's best to be cowshous;" and, having delivered himself of this safe and general sentiment, the laird looked wiser than ever, and shook his head with an air of great intelligence. Hitherto, Scouthercakes, as the reader will have observed, had made no display of his legal acquirements. He had been too much taken aback by the sudden and unexpected effulgence of those of Skimclean; but it was by no means his intention to allow the latter to remain in ignorance of them. Availing himself of an early opportunity, he discharged a volley of law terms at Skim-

* Plusquam tolerabile (?).

clean, in which the words Rejoinder, Multiplepoinding, Reclaimer, and, above all, the phrase, "Revise the Condescendence," sounded most audibly; the latter being an especial favourite of the laird's, who used it on all occasions, on all matters indifferently, and, as everybody but himself thought, almost always in the most absurdly inappropriate cases and circumstances.

The effect on Skimclean, again, of the discovery of the laird's legal knowledge was pretty similar to that which the latter had experienced in similar circumstances, only that there was in the case of Drumwhussle a secret feeling of superiority over the laird, in the matter of intimacy with the science of the law. He, in short, considered the laird's knowledge respectable, but his own considerably more so. Now, the laird also, after his first surprise at his neighbour's acquirements had worn off a little, began to think Skimclean fully more apt and ready than profound. He considered his own depth, on the whole, rather greater. Each, thus, while certainly honouring the legal knowledge of his neighbour, enjoyed, at the same time, the comfortable conviction that he was the superior man.

Having thus come to an understanding regarding each other's character, and this having given rise to a friendly feeling on both sides, their interview terminated in Drumwhussle inviting his new acquaintance into the house, to partake of a little refreshment—an invitation which the latter graciously accepted; looking forward to a feast of quiet, deliberate legal discussion with his learned friend.

On entering the house—indeed, previous to entering it—Mr Guidyill was struck with the singular neatness and good order which everywhere prevailed—a point on which his inviter prided himself, and so much pleased was he with it, that he could not refrain from openly expressing his approbation.

"A' accordin to law, Skimclean," he said, looking around

him with a complimentary air of satisfaction; "a' accordin to law, I see."

"Ay, ay," replied his host, perfectly understanding the laird's metaphorical laudation, and smiling complacently; "we aye try to keep things in as guid order as possible. I look after everything mysel, and see that a's done as it should be. That's the true way, laird."

"Nae doot o't, nae doot o't," said the latter. "Nacthing like revisin the condescendence, Skimclean—eh!" he added, with an intelligent look.

"Right there, laird," replied Drumwhussle, "as honest Donald Quirkum, the writer, ance said to me whan I consulted him anent a point o' law, in the case o' Drumwhussle *versus* Camlachie. 'Drumwhussle,' said he, 'Drumwhussle' —— But I'll tell ye a' about it presently, laird," said Skimclean, suddenly interrupting himself, to perform the duties of hospitality towards his guest; "step ben, step ben." And he ushered the laird into a little sitting-room in the back part of the house.

"Now, laird, what wull ye drink?" inquired Drumwhussle. "Wull ye tak a drap o' cauld straik, or wad ye hae ony objection to a warm browst?"

"Weel, if equally convenient, I'll vote for the toddy," replied the laird.

"I second the motion," said Skimclean, now proceeding to a closet in a corner of the room, from which he shortly emerged with his arms and hands loaded with bottles, glasses, jugs, and decanters, and all the other paraphernalia requisite for the occasion. These arranged on the table, flanked by an enormous cheese, and hot water supplied from the kitchen, Drumwhussle commenced brewing *secundum artem;* and having produced the desiderated beverage, handed over half a glass to the laird, for his opinion as to its merits. The laird tasted, gave a short suffocating cough, and, speaking at such intervals as the stifling affection afforded—

"Re-revise the—the con-condescendence, Skimclean. Revise the—the condescendence. It's far owre strong."

"It micht hae a waur faut, laird," replied Drumwhussle, "an' it's ane that's easy mended," he added, filling up the jug with hot water. "Taste him now, laird."

"Accordin to law," replied the other, emphatically, after smacking off the half-glass submitted to him. "Accordin to law at a' points as accords. Just the thing now, Skimclean."

The liquor thus approved of was immediately subjected to the process of consumption, which its merits were so well calculated to insure for it, and this at such a rate that the consumers very soon began to exhibit, in their own persons, rather curious specimens of the effect of strong drink on the animal economy. They began to speak thick and fast, and both at the same time; their conversation chiefly turning on the various actions and law proceedings in which they had from time to time been engaged.

It was during this confabulation that Skimclean informed his guest of a certain law-plea in which he was at the moment involved, and in which he was ably supported by the astute Donald Quirkum, already alluded to.

"The case, ye see," said Skimclean, "the case, ye see, my frien, is jist this:—In the place whar I was last, Craignockan, ane o' my laddies had a bit gemm cock, a bit steeve fechtin wee beastie, yea, a deevil o' a cratur. Aweel, ye see, it happened that our neebor the schulemaster had anither, o' whilk he was sae proud that he seemed to think mair o't than o' his wife. It was beyond a' doot a wonderfu' bird. His son brought it—so at least he said—frae Sumatra, in the East Indies—something o' the jungle-cock, or Jago cock species, *gawlus giganteus** ye ken—ye'll maybe no understand the Latin."

"Deel an' it may choke ye, as the *gallows* has dune mony

* Gallus giganteus (?).

a better man!" interrupted the laird. "Purge the record o' a' bad Latin! Ha! ha! Drumwhussle, I ken guid Latin frae dog-Latin or cock-Latin, just as weel as ye do. Purge the record, man, I say."

"Let me alane, man," replied Drumwhussle, impatiently; "ye interrupt my story wi' your scraps o' misapplied learning. You should never insinuate an ill motive in English. Do ye no ken lawyers never use the words 'bad intention' in designating vice: they veil a' enormities in Latin—for the craturs are sae pure an' delicate-minded that they couldna bear the expression o' man's frailties in the vulgar tongue; *maelice prepense—maelice prepense* is the term you should hae used, man. But letten that slip gang—for I excuse ignorance whar knowledge is so difficult o' attainment—the cocks were brought face to face, an', like true lawyers, they closed—no the record, for the craturs despised a' condescendence o' grievances; they fought upon the mere libel an' defence: a craw on each side *vivy vocey;* and till't they gaed wi' a pluck seldom witnessed out o' the Parliament House. The upshot may be easily predicted: weight, substance prevailed just as in the courts o' justice—the 'midden,' a pound heavier than the Sumatra jungle-cock, killed his opponent in five minutes; and Jock, lifting up the victor, that crew a noble triumph in his arms, hurried awa, an' left the dominie's cock lying a mere *kappit mortum*—like an interlocutor that's allowed to become feenal because nae man can mak either head or tail o't—on the ground, a corp, or, as Quirkum ca'ed it, a *corpus delichtfu.*"*

"Capital, capital," cried the laird. "We'll hae a plea, I hope, on the ground o' damage. A better case for 'plucking' never came before the fifteen."

"Ay, and that wi' a vengeance," resumed Drumwhussle. "Though the cock's plea was feenal, a *sleeping* or *dead case,* as lawyers ken, may produce twenty living anes. The do-

* Corpus delicti (?).

minie valued his cock at the price o' twenty guineas; he was to have been the *pawter* o' a new breed (he said) that he intended to produce in Scotland; an' the expense o' bringing him frae Sumatra alane was at least the half o' that sum. Like a sturdy litigant—gemm to the heels—I resisted the demand o' damage, an' took my ground on the instant—alleging *preemo*, that the cocks fought *sowy sponty;** and, *secundo*, that the slaughtered cock was a mere 'blue ginger;' and thus throwing the *onus* o' proving the contrary on the back o' the dominie."

"A noble device," shouted the laird; "famous pleas in law. Even Corporal Jooris† himsel could na hae ta'en his position better. But proceed, proceed. I'm deein to hear the issue. Oh, that that plea had been mine! The chancellor's wig wad hae bobbit owre't; for they say there's nae stoure in it, as in the mealy, muddy *scratches* in our Parliament House. Come awa wi' the soul-stirring intelligence."

"Ay, an' *pouch*-stirring too," rejoined Drumwhussle. "Weel, the dominie was as guid gemm as his cock, an' awa he hied to Paisley, an' put the case into the hands o' that clever deevil o' a cratur Jobbit, who, *instanter*, sent me a summons, containing a preamble o' nineteen pages, an' a conclusion o' three—seventy-five words a-page, according to my calculation. I declare the screed made my vera een reel, it was sae masterfully Latineezed, turned, interwoven, an' crammed wi' 'saids' and 'foresaids.' It set forth the said dominie as 'greeting' to the sheriff for the loss o' his cock—a maist cunning an' loyal device o' Jobbit's, wha dootless had an ee to the case going before the depute, an' then it went on to narrate" (Drumwhussle drew out a copy of the summons) "that 'the complainer had commissioned the said bird or cock—along with a female—which was of the species *gallus giganteus*, from the island of Sumatra, where

* Sua sponte (?). † Corpus juris (?).

it is known by the natives of that island by the scientific, or vulgar, or common appellative of *ayam bankiva*—all as appeareth from Temmink's History of Cocks—and that the complainer's intention or object, in so commissioning the said birds from that distant region, was, that he might introduce into our country the breed, which was supposed to be more full of blood and spirit than our own breed of poultry, and had, moreover, the advantage of producing more eggs—insomuch as the female laid all the year through, while the flesh was whiter and more highly-flavoured, approaching, in this respect, to that of the pheasant; that the expense of bringing the said birds from Sumatra was ten guineas sterling; that the complainer had, by dint of great ingenuity and perseverance, got the said birds naturalised as completely as if they had been natural-born subjects of this realm, and was on the very eve of reaping the fruits of his patriotic labours—the fame of a breeder of a new species of poultry, and the emoluments of a vender or seller of the same to the farmers and bird-fanciers of the kingdom—when David Drumwhussle, tenant of Craignockan, actuated by *malice prepense*, or by envy, or by fear that his own breed of poultry (of the common or dunghill species) would be displaced and superseded by the other and superior kind, or by some other motive or feeling, implying *dolus*, did stir up and excite his son, John Drumwhussle, for whose acts and deeds—being a minor, and not *forisfamiliated*—he was liable, to bring—*vi aut clam*—his the said David Drumwhussle's cock, and his the said complainer's, into a pugnacious attitude and position, and to instigate the same to mortal combat, whereby the said cocks having engaged *secundum suam naturam* in a lethal *duellum*, did fight till his, the complainer's, was left in the field dead; that the primary consequence of this premeditated act was, that the female was rendered mateless, unproductive, and useless, insomuch as her cohabitation and society with cocks of this

country would never be the means of producing the species of *gallus giganteus;* the secondary, that the complainer was deprived of a source of legitimate gain; and the tertiary, that the country of Great Britain lost the superlative advantage of an improved breed of poultry.' Thae are the premises."

"An' fine premises they are," replied Guidyill. "Jobbit never laid an egg mair certain o' producin a weel-feathered bird for the lawyers."

"Ye're richt, laird, sae far," replied Drumwhussle; "but ye've yet to learn that it had twa yolks—twa law-pleas cam out o't. But ye'll hear. I needna read the conclusion —a' in the ordinary form, ye ken:—therefore it ought and should be found and declared, and so forth; and that I should be decerned to pay twenty guineas as the value of the cock, and damages sustained for the loss of his expected progeny."

"Weel, weel, the defences, the defences," cried the laird, in eager expectation. "Ye wad state the defence on the merits first, I fancy, an' then the preliminary ane."

"The cart afore the horse, ye fule!" answered Drumwhussle, chuckling. "I despised a' dilatory pleas, man: I cam to the marrow at ance, an' instructed my agent, Mr Kirkham, or Quirkum, as he is generally styled, for his exquisite adroitness an' cleverness, to use the very highest flicht o' his inventive fancy—to consult Erskine an' Stair, an' even Corporal Jooris—to dive into the Roman Pawndees* —the deegest—the discreets—every authority, in fack, he could think o'—no forgetting Cock on Littletun; and send me a draft o' the defences *siny mory.*† He did so, and oh, such a beautiful invention! They set forth, as a kind o' flourish afore the real tug o' the tournay, that the libel was a big lee frae beginning to end; that the pursuer's cock was, even in his ain showing, an alien cratur, an' no en-

* Pandects. † Sine mora.

titled to the richts o' natural-born subjects; that he interfered wi' the queens o' the seraglio o' my winged potentate —making love to them, crawing to them, an' displaying his gaudy wings to them, as if he were lord o' a' the feathered creation; that the defender's cock, acting upon the weel-ascertained richt o' defending conjugal property, slew him, on the strength o' the English case, Jenkins *versus* Lovelace, where a husband was found justified in taking the life o' ane wha made love to his wife. In the second place, it was denied *simpleeciter* that the cock was o' the species *gawlus giganteus*, being a mere 'blue ginger'—worth five shillins —o' the auld breed o' Scotland, whilk cam frae the stock named by the Greek play-writer, Mr Arrantstuffanes, 'the Persian bird.' We thus threw the hail *onus proovandy* on the back o' the dominie, an', by my faith, he fand the weight o't!"

"A noble defence—jist exactly what I wad hae written," ejaculated Guidyill, in ecstasy. "Weel, ye wad revise the condescendence after that, I fancy?"

"Before it was written, man?" responded Drumwhussle. "Na, na; ye ken little aboot thae things. The dominie was ordered to condescend on what he undertook, and offered to prove in support o' his libel, then we answered, then he revised, then we revised, then he re-revised, then we re-revised, then he made an addition, which we answered by a corresponding addition, equal to a re-re-revision."

"Hurrah!" cried Scouthercakes.

"Then the record was purged, then closed, an' then we set to proving—for the proof was conjunk and confident—wi' a' the spirit o' the cocks themselves. Oh, it was gran' sport! The dominie brought twa witnesses frae Lunnon, to swear to the cock having been brought frae Sumatra; an' I brought frae Dumbarton, where the best cock mains in a' Scotland are fought, twa cock-fanciers wha had seen the dominie's bird, to swear that it was a 'blue ginger;' then

there was sic proving, and counter-proving, witness against witness; the dominie's servant swearing to the instigation practised by Jock, my bothie men swearing an *aliby;* valuators for the dominie fixing ae value, and valuators by me fixing anither, till I fancy there were nae fewer than fifteen witnesses a-side."

"Famous, famous!" cried the laird; "what a glorious main! Never was sic a cocking sin the match in 1684, between Forfarshire and the Loudons. You would be decreetit favourably, beyond a' doubt."

"Mr Guidyill," answered Drumwhussle, taking up his glass, "I was cast in fifteen guineas, an' a' expenses."

"Gran'!" exclaimed the laird—"gran'! Jist as bonny a plea as a man could wish. Ye protested an' appealed."

"I gaed straught to my agent, Quirkum," continued Skimclean, "and stated the case to him, expressin, at the same time, my determination no to submit to the iniquitous decision o' the sheriff. Aweel, what did Mr Quirkum say or do, think ye, on my expressin mysel this way? He never spak, but, gruppin me by the haun, looked in my face, an', after a minnit, said, 'Drumwhussle, ye're a man o' spirit, an' I honour ye for't. Ye've just now come oot wi' sentiments that do ye the highest credit. I'll manage your case for ye, Drumwhussle. I'll let the dominie hear such a cock crawin as he never heard in his life before.' Aweel, ye see, we had the cock flappin his wings in the Court of Session in a jiffy. And as bonny a case it was, so Mr Quirkum said, as ever he had the haundlin o' in his life. Seemly in a' its bearins, he said, and as clean's a leek on our side, a' as ticht an' richt as legal thack and rape could mak it. But deil may care—wad ye believe it?—it was gien against us here, too, cast wi' a' expenses. There was a dish o' cockyleeky for ye, laird—cast wi' a' expenses!—an' they war nae trifle, as ye may weel believe; for yon lawyer folk dinna live on muslin kail.

The laird shook his head with a concurring emphasis, whose force of expression was greatly increased by certain pungent reminiscences of his own disbursements in this way.

"Aweel, there we are, ye see," continued Drumwhussle; "but we're no beat yet. I'll hae't to the House o' Lords, laird, if I should pawn my coat for't." And he struck the table with his fist, in token of his high determination, till jugs and glasses rang again.

Delighted with his host's beautiful spirit of litigation, the laird, in a corresponding fit of enthusiasm, got up from his seat with a full bumper in one hand, and, extending the other across the table towards Skimclean—

"Your haun, Drumwhussle," he said, briefly, but with great emphasis. "Your haun, my frien. I honour ye—I respeck ye for thae sentiments." Saying this, he grasped the extended hand of his host, who had risen to meet his advances, shook it cordially, tossed off the contents of his uplifted glass to his success in his law-plea, and concluded with a piece of advice.

"Stick till't, Skimclean," he said—"stick till't as lang's there's a button on your coat. That's my way. Kittle them up wi' duplies, and triplies, and monyplies, and a' the plies that's o' them—if thae papers are allowed in the Hoose o' Lords—an', if they stir a fit, nail them wi' a rejoinder and dilatory defences. Gie them't het, Skimclean. Gie them't het; an' if a' winna do, sweep your opponent clean oot o' the court wi' a multiplepoinding an' infeftment. That's the legal coorse, accordin to the new form o' process—no Mr Eevory's, or Mr Berridges, or the like o' thae auld forms—quite oot o' date noo."

"Jist my ain notion o' things preceesely, laird, replied Drumwhussle. "Although I say't that shouldna say't, I maybe ken law as weel as some that hae mair pretensions. A' the law in the country, laird, 's no to be fan' under puthered

weegs." (This with a look of great complacency.) "My lair's maybe nae great things, but my law's guid. I'll haud up my face to that ony day. An' I'm thinkin, laird, ye ken twa or three things in that way yersel."

"I should," replied the laird, with a knowing smile.

"But ye'll never hae been in the Court o' Session, maybe," said Skimclean.

"Revise the condescendence there, Drumwhussle," replied the laird. "A score o' times at the least. It wad hae been a bonny business, indeed, if I had never had a case in the Court o' Session. A man wad hae but sma' pretension to respeck, in my opinion, that hadna been there wi' half-a-dizzen."

We here take the liberty of interrupting, for a time, the colloquy of Skimclean and his guest, for the purpose of saying, that, although we have given, as we imagine, a pretty correct account of their conversation on the occasion to which our story refers, we have by no means done equal justice to the subject of their potations. On this point we have said little or nothing, an omission which we beg now to supply, by stating most explicitly, that, during the whole time they were engaged in exchanging the sentiments which we have just recorded, they had been also unremitting in their attention to the toddy jug, which had three several times sank to the dregs under their persevering devotions. It is not necessary to add, we should suppose, that this feat was not performed with impunity, nor that it had the effect of considerably deranging the faculties of the two lawyers. All this will be presumed—and, if it be not presumed, let it be so immediately; for it was the fact.

Both Skimclean and the laird were now in a state of great felicity and personal comfort. They swore eternal friendship to each other at least fifty times over, and on each occasion sealed their amiable protestations by a cordial shaking of hands. But it was not love alone they expressed for

each other. There was respect too, the most profound respect for each other's abilities and legal knowledge, declared in no very measured terms. In truth, if their own statements on this subject could have been credited, no two lawyers had ever got together who made so near an approach to Coke and Lyttleton. At an advanced period of the evening, and just after the fourth jug had been put upon active service, Skimclean again adverted to his famous game-cock case, and, having mentioned that he was going to Paisley on the following day, to call on Quirkum, on the subject of carrying the said case to the House of Lords, asked the laird if he would have any objection to go along with him and assist in the consultation which would then and there take place.

"It wad be a great favour, laird," said Skimclean; "for ye ken twa heads are better than ane, and three than twa, an', moreover, laird, to tell a truth, there's twa or three points o' law that I'm no jist sure that Mr Quirkum's clean up to, an' I wad like a man o' your knowledge to be present. I dinna ken but you an' me, laird, wad bother the best o' them."

The laird smiled slightly but complacently at this conjunct compliment, and modestly said that he had never seen the "law-wir yet that he couldna bambouzle. An' as to gaun in wi' ye the morn to Paisley, Skimclean," he added, "that I'll do wi' great pleasure." This was said, most assuredly, in all sincerity; for, next to the happiness of having a plea of his own, was that of being allowed to have what may be called a handling of the pleas of others; especially if they had a dash of the spirit of litigation in them, and gave promise of a protracted and obstinate fight; and this the laird saw, with intuitive tact, was the character of Skimclean's.

This matter then settled, the two worthies proceeded to the discussion of various other subjects, until the laird, find-

ing that he could hold out no longer, suggested, in the midst of a series of violent hiccups, that they should "clo-close the record, and re-re-revise the condescendence." Saying this, the laird got up to his feet, leaned his hands upon the table, and as he swung backwards and forwards in this attitude, gazed on his friend opposite with a look of drunken gravity. "We maun clo-clo-close the record," he repeated, "and re-re-revise the condescendence."

"That's no accordin to the form o' process, laird," replied Skimclean, making an effort, but an unavailing one, to get up also to his feet. "That's no accordin to form, laird," he said; and now making a virtue of necessity, by throwing himself back in the chair which he found he could not conveniently leave.

"Revise the condescendence, Skimclean," rejoined the laird, after a pause, during which he had been employed in an attempt to collect his scattered senses; an operation which was accompanied by sundry odd contortions of countenance, especially a strange working of the lips. "I say, revise the condescendence, Skimclean. It's baith accordin to law an' to form. Ye're no gaun to instruck me, I houp, in a law process."

"Instruck or no instruck," replied Drumwhussle, with great confidence of manner, "ye're as far wrang as ever Maggy Low was, when you speak first o' closin the record an' then o' revisin the condescendence. Onybody that has ony law in them at a' kens that the revisin o' a condescendence taks place *before* the closin o' the record, an' no after't."

"Before or after't, it's guid law," said the laird, doggedly, and still rocking to and fro, as he leaned on the table, and continued gazing with lacklustre eye in the face of his learned brother opposite. "It's guid law, I'll uphaud; an' it's my opinion, Skimclean—an' I'll just tell ye't to your face—that for a' your blether o' Latin, I dinna think ye hae

a' the law ye pretend to. The thorough knowledge is no in ye. That's my opinion."

The reply to this sneer at Skimclean's legal acquirements was of as summary and expressive a nature as can well be imagined. It was the contents of a jug—said contents being somewhere about a quart of boiling hot water—discharged with great force and dexterity full in the face of the "soothless insulter," accompanied by the appropriate injunction —"Tak that, ye auld guse; an' if that's no law, it's justice."

"Revise *that* condescendence," replied the laird, making a tremendous effort to seize his antagonist across the table, in which effort the said table instantly went over with a tremendous crash, sending every individual article that it had supported into a thousand pieces. In the midst of the wreck and ruin thus occasioned lay the prostrate person of the laird, who had naturally gone down with the table, and who now, as we have said, lay floundering amongst the debris, composed of broken bottles, jugs, and glasses, with which the floor was covered.

"A clear case o' damages," shouted Skimclean.

"Revise the condescendence in that partikler," said the laird, rising to his feet, and exhibiting sundry bleeding scars on his lugubrious countenance. "That cock 'll no fecht, Drumwhussle. The case is no guid in law. It wadna stan a hoast in the Court o' Session."

"Wull *that* stan, then?" exclaimed Skimclean, making a lounge at the laird's face with his closed fist, which took full effect upon the enemy's left eye.

"I maun mak a rejoinder to *that*," said the laird, now attacking his host in turn, and with such effect, as finally to floor him, being, although the older, by much the stronger man—"I maun mak a rejoinder to *that*," he said, first striking at, and then grappling, his antagonist, when a deadly struggle ensued, which ended in both coming to the floor with an appalling thud..

The laird, although taken from his feet, still maintained his physical superiority by keeping the foe under him. He was uppermost, and uppermost he determined to remain; and this triumphant position he further secured himself in by seizing Skimclean by the neckcloth, and, by the vigour of his hold, subjecting him to a fac-simile of the process of strangulation.

"What think ye o' my law, noo, ye puir empty pretender?" said the laird, as he gave the other twist to Drumwhussle's neckcloth—"you and yer trash o' Latin, that ye ken nae mair aboot, I believe, than a cow kens about a steam-engine."

"That's aboot yer ain knowledge o' law, I'm thinkin," replied Skimclean, chokingly, but boldly; and in gallant defiance of his present adverse circumstances. "I wad match ony coo I hae in my byre against ye at a defeeckwalt point o' law."

"Do ye fin' *that?*" said the laird, twisting Drumwhussle's neckcloth with increasing ferocity. "There's law for ye. There's the strong arm o' the law for ye. Doin summary justice on an ignorant, pretendin idowit."

How or in what way this fierce struggle between the two lawyers would have terminated, we cannot tell, as it was not permitted to attain its own natural conclusion. It was interrupted. At the moment that the laird had renewed his efforts on Skimclean's neckcloth, which the reader will observe was doing the duty of a bowstring, the wife of the latter rushed into the apartment, exclaiming—

"The Lord hae a care o' me! what's this o't?—what's this o't? What are ye fechtin aboot, ye auld fules?"

"A case o' hamesookin, Jenny—a decided case o' hamesookin," shouted Skimclean. "A man attacked an' abused in his ain hoose. That's hamesookin, an' severely punishable by law."

"Tuts, confound yer law?—mind reason and common sense," said Skimclean's wife, seizing the laird by the coat-

tails, and dragging him off her prostrate husband, of whose *penchant* for law she had long been perfectly sick. "Mind reason an' common sense, an' let alane law to them it belangs to."

Whether it was that the combatants had expended all the present pugnacity of their natures in the contest which had just been brought to a close, or that the soft tones of Mrs Drumwhussle's voice had suddenly allayed their ire, we know not; but certain it is, that the faces of both the lawyers exhibited, all at once, and at the same instant, a trait of amiable relaxation, indicative of a return of friendly feeling, together with something like a sense of regret, and perhaps shame for what had passed. It was then, under this change of sentiment, that Skimclean replied, laughingly, to his wife—

"Weel, weel, gudewife, if the laird here's willin, we'll close the record, an' let byganes be byganes."

"Wi' a' my heart," said the former; "for it's a case that'll no stan law. Sae we'll just revise the condescendence, an' tak better care for time to come. This wark's no accordin to law."

"Neither law, nor reason, nor sense," said Mrs Drumwhussle, who was a rattling, but good-natured, motherly sort of woman. "Ye're jist a pair o' auld fules—that's what ye are. Noo, laird," she continued, as she turned round to that worthy—who presented rather an odd spectacle; his person exhibiting, at this moment, a strange combination of ludicrous points—extreme tallness, extreme thinness, extreme drunkenness, extreme snuffiness, if we may use the expression, and a countenance marked and mangled in a manner that was absolutely hideous to look upon, although the application of a little simple water would have shown that the said countenance was not, after all, very seriously damaged—"noo, laird," said Mrs Drumwhussle, laying her hand kindly on the shoulder of her husband's

guest, "ye'll jist stap awa hame, like a guid honest man as ye are, an' you an' the gudeman 'll meet the morn, whan ye're baith yersels, an' ye'll baith be as guid freens as ever —maybe a hantle better; for I've kent folk that never could understan ane anither till they had a guid fecht."

To the general tone of this mediatory interference, neither Skimclean nor the laird offered any objection. Nay, as we have already shown, it met with their decided approbation; but there was one clause in it, as they themselves would have called it, which both peremptorily resented. This was the insinuation that they were tipsy.

"Revise that part o' the condescendence, Mrs Drumwhussle," said the laird, in allusion to the said insinuation. "I could discuss a point o' law as weel as ever I did in my life. I'm as soun's a bell, woman."

"A' ticht an' richt, laird. We're baith that," said Skimclean, staggering towards his guest. "For my pairt, I never was better in my life. Never mair correck. Jenny, ye're wrang—clean wrang, I'm perfeckly *compous*."

"Aweel, it's perfectly possible," replied the latter, laughing; "but I canna be far wrang in advising the laird here to stap his wa's hame, an' you, Davie, to slip to yer bed."

"Ou, no, no, ye're no wrang there," said both the lawyers together; and in evident satisfaction with the circumstance of Mr Drumwhussle's having deserted the charge of inebriety, and founding upon other grounds—"ye're no wrang there," repeated the laird; "for it's gettin late, an' my road's nane o' the straughtest."

Having been provided with his hat and stick, and an old tartan cloak, which was his constant companion in all his wanderings, the laird now commenced his retreat out of the house, and had gained the outer door, when his host shouted after him—

"Mind the consultation, laird—mind yer promise o' gaun to Paisley wi' me the morn."

"I'll revise that condescendence, and decern as accords," replied the laird, turning half round, to deliver himself of this mystical response. Then, resuming his progress, he was soon quit of the house, but not of the premises altogether, as was made manifest by a certain awkward interruption he met with before he had gone fifty yards. This was by a huge watch-dog, within the reach of whose chain one of the laird's lee lurches had brought him. Availing himself of the tempting advantage, the dog bolted, with a growl like that of a tiger, out of his wooden tenement, and, in a twinkling had the laird fast by the cloak, at which he commenced tugging with a violence which all its owner's efforts to counteract, by dragging himself in an opposite direction, could not overcome. Finding his exertions this way vain, and that a continuance of them would only insure the dissolution of his favourite outer garment, the laird turned upon his enemy, and, making some hits at him with his stick—"Desert the diet, ye brute; an' bring yer action in a regular form, an' accordin to law," he exclaimed, abruptly; and, by a dexterous movement, avoiding a snap at his leg, which the dog at this moment made—"Tak yer mittimus," he said, discharging another violent blow at the animal, which, however, had only the effect of increasing the latter's ferocity; for the dog now fairly leaped on his back, and seizing him by the neck of the coat behind, laid him, in an instant, prostrate in the mud. Having thus got the laird down, the dog, without offering him further injury, planted a fore-leg on either side of him, and, with his muzzle within half-an-inch of his face, commenced a series of growls, "not loud, but deep," that indicated anything but a friendly feeling towards his victim.

Even in these circumstances, however, the laird's deep sense of the propriety of proceeding strictly "according to law" in all cases did not desert him. Looking steadily at the dog, he thus addressed him, in a clear, loud voice,

imitating, as nearly as he could, the tones of a court crier:—

"I, John Guidyill, Laird o' Scouthercakes, summon, warn, and charge you, Skimclean's dug, to compear before His Majesty's justices o' the peace for the shire o' Renfrew, within their ordinary court-place, in Paisley, upon the 12th day o' October, 1817, at eleven o'clock forenoon, to answer, at the instance o' the above-designed Laird o' Scouthercakes, for an illegal assault made on the said laird's person, on the nicht o' the 2d day o' October, in the aforesaid year, or in the month o' September preceding, or the month o' November following. This I do on the 2d day o' October, one thoosan aucht hunner an' seventeen years, with certification as effeirs. John Guidyill.—There, noo, ye're regularly ceeted," added the laird; "sae desert the diet for the present; an' see that ye mak punctual compearance in the hoor o' cause."

Having thus delivered himself, the laird made another violent effort to free himself from his captor, and to regain his feet. But, finding this vain, he commenced a series of shouts for assistance, that had the effect of bringing Mrs Drumwhussle and a formidable body of her retainers to the rescue. By the aid of this friendly detachment, the laird was immediately relieved from his perilous situation. On regaining his feet—

"I tak ye a' witnesses," said the laird, "hoo I hae been abused wi' that infernal brute o' yours; an' it's my opinion that I hae a guid case baith against Skimclean an' his dug. If richtly argued, an action o' damages wad lie, in my opinion, against them baith; an' decreet wad follow, accordin to law, decernin the ane to be hanged, an' the ither to be mulcted o' a soum not exceedin fifty puns sterlin, as law directs—that's my opinion o' the case. But I'll revise the condescendence, an' let Skimclean ken the result the morn."

Saying this, the laird gathered his cloak, in which there were now three or four tremendous rents, around him, and stalked, or rather staggered away, on his progress home, which he reached in safety, and without meeting with any further interruption.

Faithful to his promise, and oblivious of all causes of difference with his host of the preceding night—an obliviousness for which a night's sleep and a return to sobriety, co-operating with the irresistible temptation of being permitted to interfere with the latter's law-plea, will sufficiently account—the laird waited, on the following day, on Skimclean, and announced his readiness to accompany him to Paisley, as had been previously arranged between them. Skimclean having, in turn, expressed his sense of the obligation, the two lawyers shortly after set out for the town just named —a distance of from five to six miles, which they beguiled with learned discussions on the various points of law that had come within the range of their respective experiences. On reaching Paisley, our two worthies directed their steps to the residence of Mr Quirkum, whom they luckily found at home. This worthy limb of the law was a stout, burly personage, with a loud voice, and tolerably confident manner, although it was pretty generally alleged that his skill in his profession was by no means very profound. This lack of legal knowledge, however, was compensated by a bold bearing, an unhesitating promptitude of decision, an utter fearlessness in delivering an opinion, whether right or wrong. Such, then, was the gentleman to whom Skimclean introduced the laird, as "an intimate frien, wha kent twa or three things in the law line, an' whom he had jist brocht in to gie him an inklin o' what was gaun on in the gemmcock case, in the whilk, he bein a near neebor, he took a freinly interest."

"Glad to see your *learned* friend, Skimclean," said Quirkum, who affected the being a bit of a wag in his own

way. "He'll perhaps help us with a little useful advice, which, you know, is always welcome."

And Quirkum rubbed his hands with a sort of professional glee, and chuckled facetiously at his own banter. Not perceiving the irony of the lawyer's remarks, the laird smiled complacently, and said—

"That he didna pretend to ony very great skeel in law matters, although he had had some experience in that way, too. But that he wad be very glad to gie ony hints that micht appear to him, on revisin the condescendence in his frien Skimclean's case, to be likely to be o' service."

"Muckle obliged, I'm sure, laird," said Drumwhussle; "an' sae is my frien Quirkum here, I daresay." Then addressing himself to the latter, "Wad ye be sae guid, noo, as gie oor frein here an inklin o' oor case. I hae explained to him the gruns o' oor action; but ye can let him mair fully into the merits o' the case."

Now, Quirkum, although, as already said, no great lawyer, was by no means destitute of common sense. In fact, he was rather clever in a general sort of way, and this cleverness enabled him to see at once what kind of a character the laird was. Skimclean he knew well before, and according to this knowledge he acted on the present occasion. He rattled over a given quantity of law terms, galloped through two or three varieties of legal processes, and concluded by asking the laird's opinion of what they had done, what they were doing, and what they should do. Confounded with the volubility of Quirkum, of whose oration he did not comprehend one word, and yet unwilling to acknowledge his difficulty, the laird adopted the safe course of merely shaking his head, and looking wise. For some seconds he uttered not a word. At length—

"It seems to me a gey steeve case," he said. "There's twa or three points in't that wad require consideration, an' on the whilk I wadna consider myself jist free to gie

an aff-haun opinion. Noo, this bein the case, I'll jist revise the condescendence in my ain mind, an' gie my frien, Skimclean here, the benefit o' the process at anither meetin."

This Quirkum thought pretty well from a man whom he perfectly knew did not understand a word of what he had said; and he knew this, because he had not understood a word of it himself. Not being possessed of this important secret, however, Skimclean thought the laird's remarks highly creditable to his prudence; and, having expressed himself to this effect, concluded by inviting Quirkum and his brother lawyer to adjourn with him to the Brown Cow Inn, to "tak a bit chack o' dinner;" adding facetiously, "that, though law was a very guid thing, it wadna fill the wame."

The laird smiled, and Quirkum laughed outright at the sally, and both at once accepted the invitation by which it was associated. Acceptation was speedily followed by accomplishment. In little more than a quarter-of-an-hour after, the whole three were seated around a comfortably-covered table in a small, snug back-parlour in the Brown Cow Inn. Dinner despatched, tumblers were filled up, and a very pleasant career of talking and drinking commenced, and continued without interruption for somewhere about a couple of hours. At the end of this period, however, a circumstance occurred which somewhat disturbed the quiet sociality of the party. A person, evidently the worse of drink, unceremoniously entered the room, and, seemingly unconscious that he was intruding, deliberately planted himself in a chair directly opposite the laird. It was some seconds before he appeared to recognise any of the party—as, indeed, it was hard he should, for he knew and was known to none of them, but one. This one was our friend Guidyill, and him he knew to his cost; the laird having once defeated him in a law-plea about a certain pathway

which passed through the corner of a field on the farmer's property. For the laird, therefore, this man, whose name was Moffat, entertained anything but a friendly feeling. It was, however, some little time before he was aware of his being in the presence of his ancient enemy on the present occasion, the liquor he had swallowed having considerably impaired his powers of discernment. These, however, at length helped him to a knowledge of the fact; and, when they had done so—

"Ho, ho, laird, are *ye* here?" he exclaimed, with a look and manner in which all the grudge he bore Guidyill was made manifest. "Ony law-pleas in the win' 'enow, laird —eh?"

"Was ye wantin ane?" said the laird, coolly. "I thocht I had gien ye aneugh o' that."

"Maybe ye hae, an' maybe no," replied Moffat. "But there's some things I ken, and some things I dinna. I dinna ken what ye're guid for; and I ken that ye're the biggest aul' rogue in the County o' Renfrew—a litigious, leein, cheatin rascal."

"Revise that condescendence, frien," replied the laird. "Mr Quirkum and Skimclean, I tak ye to witness what that man has said. Defamation o' character as clean's a leck—a thumpin action cut and dry. I tak instruments in your hauns, Mr Quirkum, an' employ you to do the needfu' in this case. Ye baith distinctly heard what was said, an' 'll testify to the fact when ca'ed upon in due coorse o' law."

Both Quirkum and Skimclean at once declared their willingness to do so—the latter from a wish to serve his friend, the former from a wish to serve himself, as he saw in the affair something like the promise of a very tolerable job.

In the meantime, Moffat, rather alarmed at the formal and business-like manner in which his complimentary remarks on the laird's character had been taken up, first en-

deavoured to back out of the scrape, and, in default of success in this, sneaked out of the room, leaving the laird an infinitely happier man than he had found him; for he was now provided with a most unexceptionable ground for an action-at-law. It was a most unexpected piece of good fortune; chance having done for him in a moment what a long period of anxiety, directed to the same end, had failed to accomplish. It was truly delightful, and the laird *was* delighted, delighted beyond measure. But, alas! by how frail a tenure is all earthly felicity held! By how frail a thread is life itself suspended! We make the remark, and the sequel illustrates it.

The laird having given instructions on the spot to Quirkum to commence an action immediately against his defamer, the party broke up. The professional member repaired to his own house, and the laird and Skimclean mounted the Greenock coach, which passed within a short distance of their respective residences. Fatal proceedings. The coach was overturned, and the laird, falling on his head, received an injury which, in half-an-hour, proved fatal to him. Skimclean, more fortunate, escaped with some slight bruises. The latter was the first to come to the poor laird's assistance after the vehicle had capsised. He found him lying on his face on the road, bleeding profusely, and apparently insensible. On turning him round, however, and raising him up a little, he opened his eyes, and, recognising Drumwhussle, said, in a slow and scarcely audible tone—"The record's closed wi' me, Skimclean. I hae gotten my mittimus. Fate has decerned against me. It was an irregular summons; but it maun be obeyed, for a' that."

The poor laird was now conveyed to an adjoining house, where he was assiduously attended by his friend, Skimclean, to whom his last request was, that he would consult Quirkum, and see whether it would not be competent for

him, Skimclean, to carry on the action against Moffat after his own decease. Shortly after making this request, the poor laird sank into a state of insensibility; and, just before he expired, having lain for some time previously without moving, scarcely breathing, he began muttering, evidently in delirium, something which the bystanders could not make out. Skimclean stooped down to catch the words. They were quivering on his lip, and proved to be, "*Clo-clo-close the Record.*"

THE PROFESSOR'S TALES.

FAMILY INCIDENTS.

There is a beautiful glen in Dumfries-shire, which I would willingly point out to any as the very beau-ideal of all glens whatever. It is, in fact, entirely surrounded by high grounds, rising ultimately, towards the north in particular, into hills, or, more properly speaking, mountains, making part of the Queensberry range. In the centre of this glen, or vale, there is a round and conical green eminence, around which a small mountain-stream winds and wanders, as if unwilling to encounter the tossings and turmoil of the linn and precipitous course beneath. I could never behold, or even think, of this snug quietude in the bosom of unadulterated nature, without, at the same time, considering it as emblematic, in a striking degree, of man's experience in life. In infancy and youth all is snug, sunny, and peaceful as this little sheltered stream; but the linns and precipices of after-life assimilate but too closely to the foam, and tossing, and tumbling of the passage beneath. On the summit of that grassy mound, there once stood a thatched cottage, with which my story is connected.

It was evening, or rather twilight, or, as emphatically expressed in Scottish dialect, it was the "gloaming," when Janet Smith, a poor widow woman, sat in her own doorway—

> "E'en drawing out a thread wi' little din,
> And beaking her auld limbs afore the sun."

A large grey cat occupied the other side of the passage, and a few hens, with the necessary accompaniment, clucked

and chuckled, and crowed around. Janet sat there in her solitude, an old, infirm, and comparatively helpless creature; but she was wonderfully contented and happy. Her own industry supplied her little wants; and she was protected, in a free house and kailyard, by Sir Thomas Kirkpatrick, the princely and humane laird of Closeburn. The wheel had just ceased its revolution, and her spectacles had just been assumed, with the view of reading, by the light of a cheery spark, her evening chapter. A cake of oatbread was toasting at the fire, and a bowl of pure whey was set upon a stool, when Janet's ear was arrested by the approach of a horseman, who with difficulty urged his steed up the somewhat precipitous ascent. The horseman had no sooner attained the doorway, than he alighted, and giving his horse to be held by a little urchin, whom he had beckoned from the wood for this purpose, he was at once in the presence of the aged inmate of this humble dwelling. The scene I shall never forget; for I was, in fact, the little boy whom he had enlisted in his service, by the tempting reward of sixpence. The horseman was tall and well-built; he might be about fifty years of age, and every way wearing the garb and the aspect of a gentleman. Having advanced towards the old woman, he looked steadily and keenly into her face, while his bosom heaved, and the tears began to indicate deep and tender emotion. The old woman seemed petrified with astonishment, and fell back into her arm-chair, as if some one had rudely pushed her down into it. At last, old Janet found utterance in these words, pronounced in a quavering and almost inarticulate voice, "In the name of God, who or what art thou?" These words, however, had not been pronounced, when the stranger had already dropped down on his knees, and had actually flung himself into the arms of his mother. Yes, of his mother—for so it proved to be, that this was the first meeting betwixt mother and child for the space of upwards

of forty years. The old woman's mind seemed for a time bewildered. She endeavoured to clear her eyes, pushed the stranger feebly from her, looked him intensely in the face for an instant, and then, uttering a loud scream, became altogether insensible.

"Oh, what shall I do!" exclaimed the stranger; "what have I done? I have murdered—I have murdered the mother that bore me! Oh, that I had staid at Brownhill inn till morning, and had apprised my poor parent—alas! my only parent—of my approach!"

Whilst he was ejaculating in this manner, the old woman's lips began to resume their usual colour, and she opened her eyes and her arms at once, exclaiming, in an agony of transport—

"My son! oh, my son! My long-lost, long-dead, long-despaired-of son!"

The scene now became more calm and rational. The stranger passed, with his mother, into the humble dwelling. I tied the horse to the door-sneck, and followed, more from curiosity than humanity. The stranger sat down on what he termed his old creepy stool, from which, in days long past, he had taken his porridge. He drew his mother nearer and nearer him, kissed her again and again, and the tears fell fast and full over his manly and withered cheeks; and, ever and anon, as old Janet would eye her tall and manly son, she would exclaim, looking into his face at all the distance which her withered arms could place him—

"Ay, me, an' is that my wee Geordie?"

The facts of Geordie's history I have often listened to with more than boyish interest; for this stranger ultimately took up his abode in a beautiful cottage, built on the spot where his original dwelling stood; and, as I came and went to Closeburn School, Mr George Smith would take me into his parlour, and discourse with me for hour after hour, and day after day, on all the varied incidents of

a stirring and eventful life. His father died early, having lost his life by the fall of a tree which he was assisting in cutting down, or felling, as it is termed. George was a first-born, and, indeed, an only child; and the kindness of the laird, with the industry of his mother, combined to rear him into boyhood. Being, however, under no paternal authority, he became wild and wayward, and, ere he had gained his thirteenth year, he was a greater adept in fishing, orchard-breaking, and cock-fighting, than in Ovid and Virgil. It was his early fortune to become acquainted with an old sailor, who had been in various engagements, particularly in that betwixt Rodney and De Grasse, in the western seas. This sailor, whose name was Bill Wilson, and whose trade in his old age was that of smuggling tea and brandy from the Solway to the Clyde, used to fill his head with adventure, and daring purpose, and successful execution. He had listened, he said, for hours to Bill's account of niggers, and buccaneers, and dare-devils, who fed on gunpowder, and walked, whistling, amidst cannon and musket shots. And then, prize-money, and Plymouth, and fun, and frolic, all night long! The thing was irresistible; so, with a letter in his pocket from Bill to an old comrade in the Isle of Man, then the centre of smuggling, George Smith took a moonlight leave of his mother, and his youthful associates, and the bonny braes of Dunsyette, and was on board a smuggler at Glencaple Key ere day dawned. He was conveyed, in the course of forty-eight hours, to the Isle of Man, and fairly stowed into the warehouse of Dick Davison, in the neighbourhood of the town of Douglas. His first adventure was the landing of a cargo of French brandy in the Bay of Glenluce; but the night was dark and stormy, and the boat upset; and, according to a published account, all in the boat—namely, three souls—had perished. The fact, however, was, that, whilst clinging to the inverted boat, he had been picked up by a West

Indian ship from Greenock, which had been driven into the bay by stress of weather, and carried out incontinent, as no land could be made, to the island of Jamaica. In the meantime, Bill Wilson thought proper to get sick, and to die, and to confess the whole truth, with the dreadful catastrophe, to the poor distracted mother.

When George arrived off Kingston, in Jamaica, he resolved upon pushing his way, in one course or another, upon land; so, having bid his captain good-by, and thanked him sincerely for the small trifle of saving his life, he set his foot on shore, almost naked, friendless, penniless. As he entered Kingston, he encountered a runaway steed, which, with a young lady screaming on its back, was plunging forwards, and entirely without control. George, acting on a natural impulse, threw himself in the way of the unruly animal, and, by getting hold of the bridle, at last brought it up; but not without several severe bruises, as he hung betwixt its fore-feet, unable, for want of weight, all at once to check the horse's career. The father of the young lady had now overtaken them; and, having alighted, extricated first his daughter, and then poor George Smith, from their perilous position. The young lady, who had in fact sustained no bodily injury, was loud in praise of him who, by his promptitude and intrepidity, had rescued her, in all probability, from much serious injury, or even from death; and George was immediately invited to accompany the party (for there was a well-mounted servant likewise) home to their villa, in the neighbourhood of the town. As they walked slowly (the young lady refusing to mount anew) up the rising ground to the south of Kingston, George had sufficient time to unfold the particulars of his short but eventful history; and to interest the father not less by his good sense and sagacity, than he had the daughter by his intrepidity and self-devotion. In a word, George found favour in the great man's eyes; and was introduced to the

overseer of an extensive plantation, with instructions to have him clothed, employed as a clerk or slave-driver, and properly attended to in all respects. This seeming accident George used always to consider as one of those arrangements of divine Providence, by which good is brought out of seeming evil; and a total destitution of all the necessaries of life was in his case prevented. For three years, George continued to act on these plantations, receiving many acts of kindness from his really humane employer; and waxing into vigorous manhood, without seasoning fever, or any disease whatever. It was Mr Walker's habit (such was the name of his benefactor) to have George up with him to dine every Saturday, when he had renewed opportunities of becoming acquainted with the young lady whom he had rescued; and who was now budding sweetly into the perfect and accomplished woman. The distance in point of wealth, and consequently station (in a country where wealth is the only rank), betwixt George and Miss Walker, kept the eyes of the parent long blind to the actual position of affairs. But true it was, and of verity, that Miss Walker's heart was fairly won, and George's was as fairly lost, without one word on the subject of love having been exchanged on either side. Wonderful, unsearchable passion!—the electric fluid does not more universally penetrate nature herself, than does this passion the whole framework of society; and yet the ethereal agency is not more remote and inscrutable in its workings and doings, than in love—

> "Sae, lang ere bonny Mary wist,
> Her peace was lost, her heart was won."

It was the employment of Miss Walker, on warm, yet refreshing evenings, to sit in her open verandah or balcony, playing on the harp, and wooing all the sea-breezes with the witchery of sweet sounds. To George Smith, who had never been accustomed to such refined and overpowering entertainment, this performance and exhibition (for what

is there in nature so graceful as a fine female hand and arm sweeping the strings of the harp?) was perfect magic. A thousand times, as he sat and gazed, trembling all over, he felt inclined to grasp the fair performer, harp and all, to his bosom; and to squeeze them incontinently into himself. Again and again he has arisen, and partly withdrawn, as one would from a house on fire. Nor was Miss Smith, on her part, insensible to the presence of a youth, uncommonly handsome, who had so early recommended himself to her good graces. Her walks and rides over the plantation were frequent; and she took particular pleasure in observing the progress of that part of her father's property over which George Smith more immediately presided. Her questions and inquiries were truly astonishing; and she seemed as anxious to learn all about the process of cane-cutting and sugar-boiling, as if her own happiness had depended on this knowledge. But George was conscientious; and although loving the "bonny lassie" (as he said) to distraction, he understood it as a crime worse than that of witchcraft — namely, of ingratitude — to disclose his feelings. For some months, matters were in this position—the young lady's health manifestly suffering, and George evidently visited by strange and unaccountable fits of silence and mental absence. The overseer, who happened to be more quick-sighted than even the father, from repeated observations, guessed at the truth; and, thinking it his duty, immediately apprised Mr Walker of his suspicions. As Mary had been destined for some time to another—to a neighbouring planter, whose property was adjoining to that of Mr Walker—steps were immediately devised to prevent the lovers from coming to any more definite understanding on the subject; and, one night, when George had just fallen asleep, after having penned a few lines to "Mary, flower of sweetest hue," &c., he was forcibly seized upon, manacled, and carried on board a ship, which was lying at

some distance from the harbour. By daylight the vessel was under weigh, and, ere noon, not a blue hill of Jamaica could be seen from the deck of His Majesty's ship Spitfire. It was needless to remonstrate or grumble—his fate, and the cause of it, were but too manifest; and he almost felt inclined to justify an act, which at once put it out of his power to prove ungrateful to so kind a benefactor. Still, still the bright idea of Mary haunted his imagination, and would not depart from his heart.

In this frigate of forty-four guns, there was a countryman, and even countryman of his own; who, having more recently left the sweet banks of the silver Nith, was enabled to give him more recent information respecting affairs in Drumfries-shire; and from him he learned that his poor mother's heart had broken, and that she was reported to have died a few days before he had left the place. This distressed George exceedingly; for, though he had been an idle and wayward boy, under more strict management it might have been otherwise; and he manifestly bore in his bosom a kind and a feeling heart. But who can recall the past, or the dead from their appointment? So, in the active discharge of duty as a seaman, and in the enjoyment of the company of one or two intimate companions, George confessed that he soon chased, in a great measure, the mournful tidings from his recollection. It was not so easy, however, to get rid of Mary: and he used to entertain his friend Tom Harkness with all the outs and ins, the hopes and fears, the pulsations and ecstasies, of his love passion. In this ship, George sailed first to Rio Janeiro, then across the Atlantic to Cape Town, back again to the Azores, and ultimately, by the coast of France, into Plymouth. Although, during the whole of these voyages, they had no windfalls, no prizes, yet his pay had accumulated, and he landed with fifty guineas in his pocket. Having no friend or home, as he now conceived, to return to, he immediately took coach

for London, resolved to make the most, in sailor phrase, of his fifty guineas. Over this part of Mr George Smith's history he himself ever preserved a veil; but I could easily gather, that his conduct, during four weeks spent in London, was, like that of many others similarly situated, anything but prudent, moral, or praiseworthy. Having at last got rid of the yellow boys, he bethought himself of returning to Plymouth, and of obtaining a berth as purser, if possible, in one of the many ships-of-war then lying in that port. When on his way down to Plymouth, he became the fellow-traveller, in the stage-coach, of a lady of a *certain age*, fair, fat, and forty, who was on a visit to a relative in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth. As his manners and person were both agreeable, he contrived to get into the good graces of the fair dame, who was yet ignorant of the "betters and the worse" of matrimony. So much was the buxom damsel taken with her travelling companion, that she invited him to visit her at "View Cottage," about a mile from Plymouth. This invitation was willingly accepted of—the visit was paid, the reception was most flattering, and, in the course of a fortnight, George was in possession of the charming Miss Higgenbottom, with one thousand pounds for her portion. With this money and the wife, George contrived to spend a couple of months at a place near Exeter, as unhappily as possible. His wife was the daughter of a rich butcher in Whitechapel, and as unlike her husband in tastes, temper, and pursuits, as possible. She was, moreover, miserably addicted to the bottle, which, with the help of a sufficient quantity of opium, brought her to the grave in the course of the time mentioned. As George, during this period, had lived upon the principal of his wife's money, he was just now where he was before—ready to step on board ship, and to push his fortune. On board ship, therefore, he went, and was immediately in the western seas, keeping a sharp look-out after some privateers, which had been, for some time

past, harassing our traders, and making prizes of our merchantmen. At this stage of his narrative, the hero of my tale used to get so animated, that I can still recall nearly the very words which I have heard, I am sure, fifty times at least.

"We had steered off and on for more than a month, betwixt Demerara and St Domingo, all along the stretch of the Leeward Islands. Our commander, Captain Broughton, was beginning to pet a little at our inactivity, and to thrust the tobacco into his left instead of his right cheek—a sure mark that he was out of tune. At last a sail appeared on the horizon, which, from her rigging, seemed of a suspicious character, and the orders were immediately issued to bear down upon her. As we neared, she hoisted British colours, and slipped quietly across our bows.

"'Oh ho!' exclaimed old 'Broughty;' 'none of your tricks upon travellers, my lad—you are no more British than I am a kail-stock; and that we will very soon ascertain, by putting a few homethrust questions to you.' So saying, he ordered two shots to be fired across her bows. Upon finding that we were disposed to grapple with her, she instantly hoisted her own colours, and sent a broadside right across our quarters. The battle now began in good earnest, and, for a full half-hour, we bowled away as if all hell had been on deck. When the smoke cleared a little, we could see that we had disabled our adversary, by shooting away part of his rigging; and the captain's orders were to arm and board instantly. We rushed on board like furies; but, in the desperate struggle, our captain fell, and almost every officer on board. There was the hesitation of a moment, which determined our fate; for the dare-devils rushed in upon us, fore and aft, and made sad work of it. Not a man, with the exception of myself, the first lieutenant, and the steward, was spared; the cutlass and the deep soon obliterated the gallant crew of the Thunderer. It

was, indeed, an awful sight; and, expecting every moment to be put to some horrid death by the monsters, I leaped from the deck into the sea, and remember nothing more till I awoke, as I conceived, in a state of future punishment. But over me there hung a countenance with which I was too well acquainted ever to mistake it: it was that of Mary Walker, my first, and dearest, and never entirely forgotten love. Her father sat by, wrung his hands in absolute despair; and Mary's face was strangely altered—wan, shrunk, and full of extreme misery. I scarcely could credit my senses, and was on the point of coming to some explanation, when a terrible tramping and bustle on board bespoke some approaching crisis. It was so. A British seventy-four was in the act of bearing straight down upon the crippled privateer, and the scarcely less disabled Thunderer, and all on board was despair and distraction. Resistance was found to be out of the question; so, in less than an hour, we were all conveyed safely on board of the Neptune — Captain Briggs commander. We were immediately carried into Kingston, and landed, at our own desire—Mr Walker having satisfied Captain Briggs in regard to my discharge from His Majesty's service."

The explanation of the whole matter was this:—Miss Walker, after her lover's departure, became very disconsolate, and her health ultimately became very precarious. The more temperate air of Britain was recommended, and her fond father had sailed with her, with the view of placing her somewhere in Devonshire, with a near relative. He proposed to return for a season, to wind up his affairs finally, which, of late, had not prospered, and to spend the remainder of his days and fortune in his native land. They had only sailed twelve hours, when, after a desperate and unequal struggle, they were captured, and put under hatches. During the desperate engagement which succeeded, the sequel explains itself. They were ultimately landed in safety

at the pier from which they had started, and all slept, the following night, under Mr Walker's roof. George Smith and Mary Walker were married in the course of a few months, nor did her husband perceive that her health declined. She lived to become the mother of two children—a boy and a girl—when her father, whose affairs, from some unlooked-for losses, had become embarrassed, died suddenly, not without some ugly surmises respecting the cause. Smith, after this, had no heart to remain on the island; so, collecting the remnant of a once princely fortune, he embarked, with his beloved wife and children, for Britain. Finding, however, that he could not succeed to his wish in his native land, he set out for Bordeaux, where he established himself in the wine trade, and, in the language of sacred writ, "begat sons and daughters." There he lived many years, in domestic peace and happiness, enjoying the society and affection of a most attached and amiable partner, and getting his family disposed of, till only one daughter remained with him unmarried. At last, death robbed him, in the disguise of a slow or typhus fever, of his beloved Mary; and, with his beautiful and amiable daughter, he sought again the shores of his own Scotland—his beloved Dumfries, his native Closeburn. Whilst dining with his daughter at Brownhill, he had learned that his aged mother was still alive, and an inmate of the same dwelling which he had himself inhabited. The rest of the story can easily be anticipated: his mother was well provided for during the few years—and they were but few—of her *happily* protracted existence; and his lovely and affectionate Eliza is now the mother of seven children, and the virtuous and beloved wife of the humble narrator of these "Family Incidents."

HOME AND THE GIPSY MAID.

I have been at school and college, I have read considerably in books, and have attended debating societies to satiety. Thus I have picked up a deal of what the world calls useful knowledge and worldly wisdom. But there is one branch of education to which I am more indebted than to any other whatever. I was born in the retired solitude of a mountain glen. I was myself alone amongst the mountains, with my mother and two old women, my relatives. I did not know, at the time, that I was any way peculiarly situated. I felt joyous and happy from morn to night; but the cause of all this happiness was no matter of inquiry. In fact, I never thought of causes at all. I took nature as she appeared, and put no impertinent questions to her. There I lay by a little stream, which, after dancing gaily down a steep and broken rock, became, all at once, a deep *bumbling* pool. There I lay, amidst the daisies and buttercups of spring, on the green plot, listening to the song of a thousand throats, and marking the suspended trout, as it rose to the fly, or floated along in the watery sunshine. At intervals, I would stretch myself supine; and, with my eyes half-closed, convert the clouds which covered in our little valley into what shapes and forms my fancy pleased. The wild bee passed in his hum; but I saw him not. The grasshopper chirruped from the adjoining grass; but I marked not his form or his locality. The buzz of insect life was in the air, and on the earth. I was not alone, and I felt it; my companions were the happy, the lively, the rejoicing, the exulting; and I partook of all their sentiments. I was, in fact, a unity lost in the midst of countless beings—a single throb in the great framework of animated nature. And, then, there were the woods which embanked and enclosed me all around. The oak, with its spread stole and broad leaf; the glorious birch, rising in pillows of

green fragrance, and overtopping all; the hazel, in its le s aspiring nature, peeping from betwixt the trees; and the sweet hawthorn, bestudding the brae, arrayed in a wedding suit of purest white. The tall ash-tree was there, and the rowan-tree, and the sloe-thorn, and the rasp-berry, and the bramble. The whole valley was my own orchard; and I selected at pleasure, without check or restraint, the nut, the sloe, and the hind-berry. Upon the top of the tall ash, there I sat, with the mavis for my companion on one side, and the blackbird on the other. With all manner of birds I was familiar, from the pyat to the water-wagtail. The searching for nests was my spring recreation, from April till July—I could tell at once the inmate from the construction of its abode. The eggs of the linnet, goldfinch, yorling, laverock, robin, titling, thrush, and blackbird, were as familiar to me as the letters of the alphabet. And if I wandered but a mile and a-half up the glen, I was in the midst of barrenness and solitude. The shepherd loomed from the distant horizon—the sheep roved along the steep—the goats clung to the cliffs. There the hawk and the raven had their abode; and there hung their nests from the projecting rock, or the horizontal tree. The heath was the nursery of its wild inmates. The whaup, and plover, and lapwing piped, and whistled, and fluttered around me. I was in the midst of their nesting-ground; and they seemed disposed to sacrifice me to their fears. Overhead were the lofty peaks of Queensberry—the greater and the less twin pillars—over which the pediment of heaven was spread. The mist trailed and deepened. I beheld its approach; and witnessed its breaking up into shreds and patches. I saw the first gleam of the sunshine, as it struggled through the density, and stood revealed in all the glory of a full effulgence of sunlight. My fishing-rod, a hazel sapling, was in my hand, and I pulled from streams and gullets of the most tiny dimensions large black and yellow trouts.

There they lay, amidst the wet spret, or on the velvet fringe of the streamlet, in all the glory of scale and fin. My soul leaped in unison to their motions; and I absolutely danced in ecstasy. When I gained the mountain summit—O my God! what impressions I have had of beauty and sublimity! On the one hand, the dark, southern range, ranging away eastward in barren magnitude; on the other, the green and softly-outlined Lead Hills, rounded into magnificence. Before me, and stretching far southward, the distant Criffell, lumbering on the horizon; the sunny Solway, gleaming in light; the Nith, winding and coqueting with its fertile banks and fruitful plains; the Annan, a younger but scarcely less lovely sister, running its lateral course to the same ultimate destiny; the nascent feeders of the Clyde, Carsehope, and Darr, bursting from their mossy cradles into the wilderness around them, rejoicing in their solitudes, and in their numerous and undisturbed inmates. Oh, what is education —the alphabet in all its combinations and significations— to this! When in after life I have had occasion to animate my public addresses with simile, or to inspire them with sentiment—when at the desk, and with the pen in my hand, I have fished in my brain for metaphor or illustration—I have constantly recurred to my infant, my boyish home; to my native glen, and woods, and streams, and cliffs, and mountains; and when I have once seated myself on the Cat-craig, or on a branch of the oak or the birch, I feel myself quite at home. I can, indeed, call spirits, as I do now, from the depths of imagination and feeling—I can ascend in the spiral movements of that blue smoke, which lies so soft and silky between me and the opposite green sward. I can sympathise with those devout and happy hearts, which, in simple female habiliments, are now plying the wheel, or preparing the frugal repast within. I see the domestic fowls, in their sunny happiness, flapping their wings in the dusty corner of the kail-yard, or crowing in frolic till

the echoes are awakened. There is but one world—one sinless, sorrowless, painless world—and this is it. Where then were the cares of the great world, which has absorbed this one? Where the jarrings of envy—the justlings of competition—the dread of disappointment—the frenzy of hope—the fever of love—the whole bevy of passions, which form the Corrievrecken of the heart! They were then, like Abraham's posterity, in Abraham's loins; they were possibilities, mere futurities—sleeping undisturbed and undisturbing in the limbs of contingencies. Alas! that ever my soul awoke from this dream!—that ever, one fine summer evening, I discovered that a change had come over my nature—that I had crept unknowingly into youth—that there was a soft delicious fire in my blood, which made me look beyond my humble cottage, with its aged inmates, for gratification and happiness! Oh, the exquisite, the ecstatic delight of this first awakening into the manhood of feeling! —when the passion-flower is just opening—when the nerves are troubled, for the first time, by the sensibilities of sex—when the blooming cheek, the rosy lip, the inviting glance, and the happily-moulded rotundities of the female form, become, for the first time, an object of fearful, of indescribable, of trembling interest! I ask any one of my readers, male and female, Was it not thus with you? Did not your first perceptions of the full compass of your nature come upon you at once? Come, no blushing now—no shuffling—it was even so; but you never liked to speak of it to any one. You thought that, in this respect, you were singular; but now, that you see I have turned king's evidence, you are conscious that what I aver is true. Here, then, I fix my landmark, with the age of puberty; all on this side is school, college, society, the world, care, troubles, and anxieties; all before this was that paradise from which I still pluck, as on this occasion, an apple or two, to refresh you and me as we journey along. Come, now, good-natured reader, and I will

tell you a tale or anecdote of this primeval state of my being.

In one of my early fishing excursions, I had the misfortune to lose myself in a dense fog or mist. I wandered on and on, not knowing well where I was (for it is well known that in such circumstances the most familiar objects assume a strange and unknown aspect), till at last I sat myself down on the brow of a peat-hag, not knowing well whether to cry or laugh at my wanderings. Twice had I come upon a tethered horse, and twice upon a thorn-tree with a solitary nest in it; so I found that I was assuredly walking in a circle, the centre of which, for anything that I could learn to the contrary, might very probably be my own habitation. Whilst employed in listening for the response of a mountain stream by which I might be directed, as by an old acquaintance, to a more familiar locality, I thought I heard a kind of strange, unearthly noise, coming from—I could not well tell by the ear—what quarter. I listened again, and all was silent, and I began to think that the noise had proceeded from some bird or beast in my immediate neighbourhood. Again, however, as I moved cautiously across the moss, the sound came upon me more distinctly—it was manifestly the sound of wailing and moaning, intermingled with much and hysterical sobbing. What could this mean? Night was at hand, the mist was manifestly mingling with the coming darkness, and here I was alone, in the presence, seemingly, of some unearthly being. My head was full of fairies, and brownies, and such-like supernaturals; and my heart, under such apprehensions, was as that of the bird taken in a snare. It immediately occurred to me that this must be some decoy fairy, employed in entrapping me into that unchristian brotherhood. The story of young "Tam Lean," which my mother had often repeated to me, occurred opportunely to augment my apprehensions and increase my agitation. I already felt as if mounted on a fairy steed—I was "pawing the light clouds," and shak-

ing my belled bridle over my native dwelling, without the power of returning to it. Whilst such meditations as these shook my whole frame, the awful voice of wo was manifestly approaching me; and I immediately took to my heels, "with all convenient speed, according to the rules of terror." But, in endeavouring to increase the distance betwixt the object of my fears and myself, I ran immediately and directly in upon it; and had all but fainted, as I saw immediately before me a small female figure running about, and crying piteously. The form came upon my vision very indistinctly, and induced me to reverse my steps, and set off in double swift time in a direction opposite to that in which I had advanced. To my utter horror and amazement, the thing pursued me swiftly, and screaming at the top of its voice. This was indeed appalling, and I already felt as if I had taken up my residence in the dark recesses of a fairy-knowe. I ran and screamed, whilst it ran screaming too, through moss and pool, and spret and heath; and there we coursed it along—startling the whaups and miresnipes with our music. At last I was fairly overcome, and threw myself head foremost into a peat hag, whilst my pursuer halted immediately over my person. Oh, I could have wished to have concealed myself, at this moment, somewhere near the centre of the earth; when a couple of shepherd's curs appeared, and instantly afterwards James Hogg, the Mitchelslacks hind (since better known as the Ettrick Shepherd), stood before me.

"What's a' this o't, sirs?" said Hogg, eyeing my tormentor and myself with a look of perplexed inquiry. "What's the matter wi' ye, Tam, that ye're derned that gate into the throat o' a moss-hole? Get up, man, an' tell me whar ye fell in wi' this bit puir lassie."

The lassie, in the meantime, had clung to the shepherd's knees, and was endeavouring, but unsuccessfully, to speak.

"It's a fairy!" I exclaimed. "O Jamie Hogg, it's a fairy! —hae naething to do wi't; it has pursued me this *hour* past" (not in reality above two minutes!); "an' I saw a great many more fairies up by yonder. O Jamie, dinna meddle wi't; it's uncanny, I'm sure."

Hereupon the fairy began to give utterance, in tones quite human, to a fearful statement, implying that she had been carried off from Annan by some gipsies, and carried away by them to the wild hills; and that, about an hour ago, she had run away in the mist, and had fairly escaped, but became alarmed as the darkness approached, and had followed me, as her only guide and protector in these wild hills. I cannot tell how much I felt relieved by this statement; and, as I began to gather up my members into a human shape, I saw plainly that my pursuer was a fine, well-thriven lassie, about ten or eleven years of age, and no unearthly fairy, as I had so lately believed. Hogg laughed heartily at my mistake, telling me that I wad find the lasses, by an' by, muckle waur than the fairies; and that, instead o' rinnin awa frae them, I wad be rinnin after them. At the time when these words were spoken, I did not rightly understand their meaning; but, reading them through the spectacles of future experience, I now understand them to the letter.

Just as this conversation was finished, a great, tall, lumbering, but most athletic fellow bore down upon us through the mist. At sight of him, the poor girl screamed piteously, and clung to Hogg, and begged most imploringly that she should not be given up to that "terrible man." Hogg had just thrown off his plaid, adjusted his staff, and put himself determinedly betwixt the stranger and the girl, when down came two brother shepherds, attracted in all probability by the noise, and guessing immediately that a battle was about to ensue. When the tinker saw that the odds were thus against him, he bent his course, as if he

had mistaken his way, in another direction, and was immediately lost in obscurity. Home to my mother's was this poor girl conducted by Hogg and me; and for three days and nights she partook of my home and board. Her story was simple and consistent. She had been out pulling rushes, to make a rush-cap, in a wood adjoining to the town of Annan, when she was accosted by a woman, who was exceedingly kind to her, giving her some sugar-bools, and decoying her by fair words into the centre of the forest. There she found four or five men, with a great many women, children, asses, &c., employed in making spoons, pans, &c., at a fire lighted in the open air. The children immediately gathered around her, and endeavoured to engage her in some games, whilst the "terrible man," as she always designated the chief of the gang, patted her on the cheek, and said,

"You must come along with me, and be my daughter."

Meantime the whole party were in motion, and the poor child was tossed into a pannier, on the back of an ass, and, being bound down with cords, was carried all night long, she knew not whither. By daybreak she found herself on the banks of a mountain-stream, and no human habitation within view. In this station she had remained for three days, being always kindly used, but observing fearful scenes, and hearing dreadful expressions. At last, being worn out with crying, and partly gained over by the companionship of her playmates, she had assumed a more resigned and contented appearance, in consequence of which she ceased to be watched with so much vigilance. Taking advantage, however, of the mist, and of the absence of the greater part of the women, she had edged into the stream, along the almost dry channel of which she had run, till she lost sight of the encampment, and had taken at once to the hill, without knowing whither she was flying. Fatigued, however, at last, and terrified, she had even resolved to re-

trace, if possible, her steps, when the occurrence above mentioned brought her refuge and safety.

I shall never forget the scene which took place on the occasion of the restoration of this sweet girl to her parents, who were immediately informed by Hogg of the asylum which the poor wanderer had found. But, as every breast in which the genuine feelings of humanity are implanted will immediately conceive what such a meeting must have been, I shall not attempt to describe it. We were all in tears, and the poor mother fainted outright, as she grasped convulsively her lost lamb (as she tenderly termed it) to her bosom.

I have lived long, and so has Jeanie Paton, the now respected mother of a large family, and the wife of honest Willie Paton, the best fisher and the best weaver in all Annandale. When I take my annual excursions south, their house is my home, and a day's fishing with Willie in the Annan is to me a treat of no ordinary delight—Jeanie welcomes us with her best, though, to be sure, I occasionally rub her a little too hard, in reference to the circumstance which made us first acquainted.

THE RETURN.

"Alas! regardless of their fate,
The little victims play;
No sense have they of ills to come,
No cares beyond to-day."

In passing by coach to Cheltenham, in the year 1831, I dined with a very agreeable fellow at Carlisle. It so happened that, in the course of conversation, I discovered that he was a class-fellow of mine, some forty-five years ago. But we had been separated ever since; nor was there a single feature by which I could recognise his countenance. He wore a wig, was sallow, withered, and almost emaciated;

whereas Charles M'Murdo, the boy of my acquaintance, was a chubby, rosy imp, with a heart as light as a feather, and feet as swift as a roe. Nevertheless, if I did not recognise him, he soon discovered me: the change upon my person being less remarkable, as I had never left my own country, nor been any way exposed to extreme climate, either of heat or cold. He having some business to transact in London, as I had in Cheltenham, we agreed, before parting, and whilst the guard was blowing his horn, to rendezvous, on my return, at Liverpool, and to proceed north in company with each other. Accordingly, at the appointed day and hour, we met; ordered a private room and a comfortable dinner at the Saddle, a bottle of good old port, and a strict watch upon all intrusion. What a night we had of it! All the scenes of our youth rose into review, and, as glass after glass, and perhaps bottle after bottle, disappeared, our souls warmed, our imaginations fired, our memories, like the churchyard at the day of reckoning, "gave up the dead that were in them," and at last we all but embraced each other, shaking hands from time to time, as the toast arose to some old remembrance, some school companion now no more. There had been twelve of us in the same class; and my friend and I were all that remained (like Job's friends), to think or to speak of the fate of the rest. One, two, three, had gone to Jamaica, and had perished, sooner or later, in quest or in possession of competence or wealth; two had been ruined by dissipated company at college, had enlisted, and perished at Waterloo; one had done well as a surgeon at Sierra Leone, but had fevered at last, and died. In short, the roll-call was mournful—we were the skeleton of the class, its ghost, its shadow; but we were alive, beside a comfortable fire, and a cheerful gas-light, and with wine before us; and it is wonderful how soon we forgot the mournful recollection which would ever and anon peep in upon us through the mazes of our many-

hued discourse. At last our enthusiasm began somewhat to subside; we ordered tumblers and hot water, with the necessary accompaniments, drew in the table closer to the fire, for it was the month of November, and agreed each to give the narrative of his own life and experience. My tale was soon told, nor would it be any way interesting to the reader to hear it. I had been a home-bird, and had attained, without much adventure or difficulty, a respectable position in society; but my old companion had been tossed about in the world, as he expressed it, like a *quid* of hay in the throat of a cow; and I shall endeavour to put the reader in possession of the outline of what Charles M'Murdo that night, betwixt the hours of seven and eleven, related to me in large detail.

"You know," said he, "my début: I was sent out to Jamaica by Mr Watson, a rich planter, to act as clerk on his plantations—in other words, to keep a large and terrible whip in constant employ. Our voyage was tempestuous; I frequently felt as if the ship, in her lurches into the trough of the sea, would never reascend, but would go down head foremost to the bottom of the Atlantic. But our captain was a skilful seaman, kept his men in heart, had his orders promptly obeyed, and we weathered the storm. Landing at Kingston, I was received in, what was termed, a warehouse by an overseer, who, after reading Mr Watson's letter, cursed me as a supernumerary, and said I might go where I liked, but I could not be there; they had too many of my sort already. Watson he called an old superannuated fool, who was determined, seemingly, to ruin the estate by the mere expense of working it. In a little, however, the storm blew over. Having drunk pretty deeply from a tumbler of rum and water—at least so he called it, though for my part I never could discover any trace of the water, and think this element might easily have proved an alibi in any court of justice—he made me partake of his beverage,

and tumble into a corner of a counting-room, beyond a number of chairs, desks, and old ledgers. My bed was none of the best, but the weather was exceedingly warm, and I contrived to sleep pretty soundly till morning. Next day I was roused betimes by a black slave, naked to the middle, and instructed in my day's work. I was to join some four or five slave-drivers at a common rendezvous, and with them to march a-field, suitably provided for my task. I saw the poor slaves hard at work—digging the soil, and planting slips of cane, under a most oppressive sun; I saw, likewise, my hardened and inhuman associates applying the scourge to mothers with children at the breast, to the old, and to the infirm. I could not stand it; my heart sank within me. Oh, how I sighed for my own native land, with all its advantages and endearments!—and how I cursed my ambition, that had been kindled at the wheels of the chariot of Mr Watson, who, though born poor as I was, had realised an immense fortune in Jamaica!"

Hereupon he burst out into an eulogy on Britain, and the administration which had given liberty to the slaves, and at the same time remunerated the unhallowed proprietors; but, after a short pause, during which I expressed my anxiety to hear the sequel of his story, he proceeded:—

"Well, custom will reconcile one to anything. You will scarcely believe me when I tell you that, though shy at first, and backward in the active discharge of my duty, I came at last to regard it as a matter of course, and to imagine that the poor blacks did not feel as I did, or experience the pain which such an infliction would have occasioned to myself. I was one day chastising a fellow, who absolutely refused to labour, on the score of indisposition, which I knew or believed to be put on, when a little child, of the African breed, came up to me, and, with a look of perfect nature and simplicity, said—

"'Ah, massa, you no have father—you never know father

—you no black man's boy—you no born at all, massa—you made of stone—you have no pity for poor black boy's pa!'

"The speech struck me exceedingly. I immediately ordered the father into the sick-house, and, patting the boy on the head, said he was a good, kind-hearted boy, and I would look after him for this. All this was repeated at head-quarters, and I was represented as neglecting my duty, and conniving at the idle and the dissolute amongst the slaves; and being summoned into the overseer's presence, I was examined, confessed the truth, and was immediately dismissed the estate.

"Where was I to turn?—Without a character, no other plantation would admit my services. The heavens over my head were iron, the earth was brass. I could get no employment, and to beg I was ashamed. I wandered down to the sea-shore, and in my excursion met with several ladies and gentlemen, riding on beautiful chargers, talking and laughing loudly all the while—and I wished to be one of them. It was this stimulus which had set me in motion, made me cross the Atlantic, and submit to great indignities—and yet here I was, an outcast less valuable than the wrecks which lined the bay. No one of the various cavalcades took the least notice of me; and I seated myself, at last, on a rock, and began to plunge little water-worn pebbles into the smooth bay. After a considerable interval of most poignant despair, the little black boy made his appearance, and told me that he had just heard of my dismissal, and that his father wished to see me in the hospital. I went with the boy half-stupified, and almost unconscious of either motive or motion. The poor, grateful creature wished me to take some money, which he had accumulated by his Sabbath-afternoon industry; but I refused it at once, though I did so with tears of gratitude in my eyes. He then informed me that he had formerly slaved on an adjoining plantation, and that his former master was of a more kindly disposition than the

present one. He had just heard of the death of one of his clerks, and, if I would present myself immediately, ere the next fleet should arrive with a fresh supply of slave-drivers, he had no doubt but, from my appearance, and my good hand of writing, I might find employment. I took the honest creature's advice; and, accompanied by little Ebony, made the best of my way to Hillside plantation, about a mile and a-half from Kingston. The kind-hearted boy went before me, and, chancing to meet Mr Ferguson, the proprietor of Hillside estate, he threw himself on his knees before him, in the most imploring manner:—

"'Young gentleman dismissed; but he no ill—he kind to poor father—he very kind to black man when sick. Massa know poor Gabby.'

"Ere the boy had risen from his knees, I had presented myself to Mr Ferguson, and told my own story precisely as it stood. Luckily for me, Mr Ferguson and my former employer were upon the worst terms possible; so I found no difficulty in getting a temporary appointment on trial. It is said somewhere that despotism is the best of all governments, when the despot is a good man. This is truly verified in these islands. Nothing can differ more than does the usage of the slaves in different plantations. The overseer, Mr Handy, on Watson's plantation, he whom I had just left, was a brutal person, almost constantly under the excitement or reaction of rum, and his slaves were constantly beaten and ill used in every way; whereas the Hillside slaves were allowed all possible indulgences, and really seemed quite happy. They used to go about, on the fine Jamaica evenings, singing, dancing, and playing upon instruments, visiting and returning visits, and enjoying all the happiness of which their state was susceptible. I lived two years on this plantation, and was handsomely paid as a clerk. I now, for the first time, began to think of accumulating money, with the view of purchase or partnership.

But an incident occured to me at this stage of my fortunes which gave them an unforeseen turn. I was kidnapped, whilst walking on the sea-shore, rather late one evening, and immediately carried on board a vessel, which sailed ere morning. This had been done, as I afterwards understood, under the direction of Handy; who, having heard of my good fortune and prosperity, persuaded a brother of his, who traded to Hudson's Bay, in the fur trade, to carry me there, and keep me out of his sight. He could not bear to think that I might possibly one day come to effect an establishment in his immediate neighbourhood. Captain Handy was a cruel, despotic, weatherbeaten piece of mortality; he carried me in a few months to Hudson's Bay, and had me introduced into a great house in the fur trade. In vain, when I got ashore, did I remonstrate against the violence which had been used in regard to me; I was immediately clothed in warm garments, armed with a musket, and marched overland, along with about ten or twelve copper-faced Indians, towards the upper lakes of the St Lawrence. Our ultimate destination was Lake Superior. There we were commissioned to trade with the Indians, exchanging muskets, spirits, and various kinds of cutlery, for fur-skins. There was a small settlement in the centre of the lake, but there were not sufficient provisions for the additional numbers during winter; so we were expected to return on land to the settlement on Hudson's Bay ere the winter set in. But this year the American winter commenced a month earlier than usual, and with unprecedented severity. We had nothing but one log-house to accommodate upwards of thirty people; but this erection was of considerable extent, and leaned against several growing trees. Our situation became immediately all but desperate. You can have no idea of an American winter in such latitudes." (Hereupon I stirred the fire, and helped myself to a glass of toddy.) "The snow comes on at once, and the

atmosphere is so loaded and thickened with drift, that you may cut it into cubes with a knife. And then the snow, which in a few hours accumulates over your dwelling to the very roof, penetrates everywhere through your wooden erection. In spite of a blazing hearth, you are shivering almost in the midst of the flame. The horrors of that winter I can never forget; we were, long ere New Year's-day, reduced to our daily shifts for our daily food. Had it not been for our Indian friends, we should have perished of hunger to a man; but their skill in archery and even in ball-shooting is altogether incredible. Nothing borne on wings over our heads escaped them. The bow was lifted immediately to the eye, the arrow was pointed, and followed for a small space the course of the bird; it flew, but apparently not straight for the object, but greatly in advance of it; but, ere it had gained its utmost ascent, the winged and the feathered objects had crossed on their courses, and the prey fell immediately, transfixed by the arrow. We broke the ice, too, of the lake, which was often three feet in thickness, and, with bait prepared by the Indians, of the seeds of trees, decoyed occasionally some half-starved fish to our lines. But, with all appliances and means to boot, we became perfect skeletons; several died of various complaints, all brought on by cold, and spare as well as unwholesome diet. Oh, what would I then have given for a dinner such as we have enjoyed this day! But, not to fatigue you with exclamations and with representations of suffering which to you must seem incredible, the winter gave way at last, and its departure was agreeably unexpected with its approach; the thaw came as much earlier as the frost had anticipated its average approach. Our boats were again on the lake, and we were enabled to ship off our skins for their ultimate destination, Montreal. As I had shown considerable talents, and what they termed mettle, during the winter trials, the commander of the party had me boated off, along with the skins, for Mr

Syme's warehouse, at Montreal. Here I met with a friend, in a cousin of my mother. He immediately took me into his warehouse.

"By this time I was sufficiently tired of a moving life; like the rolling stone of the proverb, I had gathered no fog —'*movebam, sed nil promovebam.*' I was very happy, therefore, when Mr Syme proposed my remaining at least some time with him in the capacity mentioned. Montreal, as everybody knows, is situated upon an island in the St Lawrence, and few places could be more advantageous for trade, or more picturesque in appearance. In the centre of the island there rises a beautiful eminence, still covered with trees of the primeval American forests; and towards the eastern skies lies the town itself, upper and lower, adorned with public buildings, and presenting, as you approach it, a very prepossessing aspect. Mr Syme had a warehouse, at a place called Chine, about eight miles up, and immediately upon the river. Here the furs were shipped for Europe, and Britain in particular, and here it was my duty to remain, except on Sundays, when I constantly dined with my kind relative. Mr Syme had an only daughter, two sons having died, and the mother likewise, whilst being delivered of the last. This daughter was now a young woman of nineteen, and sufficiently handsome for matrimony, considering that she was to inherit her father's wealth and business, which was itself a mine of gain. Her father, who in many respects was a kindhearted and a prudent man, was as obstinate as an old oak-trunk when he took it into his head to be so. Most people have some weak side or other —and this was his. He had determined, from the time when Samuel Horseman, the rich merchant (the richest, it was supposed, in the island), had rocked his Nancy in the cradle, and had suffered himself to be scorned with the child, that Nancy should one day or other be Mrs Horseman; and that thus, by the union of their families and their for-

tunes, there should not be a firm in Montreal that would once be spoken of in the same day with Horseman, Syme, & Co. This idea had grown with the growth of the child, and had strengthened with her strength—it was never twenty-four hours out of his head. But, one dreadful afternoon, Horseman arrived from Quebec with a little pretty French milliner, whom he had married. This was death to Syme's plans and prospects, and so he set immediately about cutting Horseman, and looking out for some other advantageous way of disposing of his *article*, which had now seen some fourteen summers. But before he could settle upon any particular individual, he was relieved from his disappointment, and restored to his intercourse with Horseman, by a gallant serjeant, who claimed Mrs Horseman as his lawful and married wife; in fact, there were several claimants; but one was as good as a hundred to Horseman, who by this time was heartily tired of his partner, and would have willingly seen her attempting a voyage of discovery over the Falls of Niagara. Syme soon redoubled his diligence, and gave his daughter to understand that, so soon as she had attained the age of nineteen, the age of her mother when she became a bride, she should be exalted to all the honours and privileges of Mrs Horseman.

"There are two, it is said, at a bargain-making; but that is merely the *minimum:* in this case, there were three, and ultimately four. Miss Syme had been exceedingly annoyed by her father's unreasonable arrangement; she, of course, disliked Horseman, as she did everything old, ugly, snuffy, and bandylegged; but her father was incessant in his importunities, or rather commands, and matters were in this state when the friend now addressing you made his appearance, and took up his principal residence at Chine. It was not long before Miss Syme and I came to understand each other. I do not know how it was—I was not romantically in love—perhaps it is not in my nature; but I was

willing to hear the poor girl's story, and to mingle tears with hers. We never talked of love; but yet, somehow or other, it made an inroad upon the debateable territory on both sides, till we felt that we were assuredly over head and ears, from the circumstance that, like Darby and Joan, 'we were ever uneasy asunder.' The father began to smell a rat, as they say—at least you and I have often said whilst at school—and he was in a furious passion, threatened dismissal to me and imprisonment to Nancy. In the meantime, death, in the shape of an ague, carried Horseman beyond the reach of matrimony—he went to that land where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage; and I became every day more and more useful to my employer. It was manifest to all that his heart had now softened, and that he had come to see the utter folly of human schemes when controverted by the decrees of Heaven. One day he was up at Chine, seeing some furs shipped for London; when in passing from the shore to the ship, he slipped a foot and fell into the water. There was no one who observed this but myself, as all the men were busily engaged. I immediately plunged headlong into the somewhat rapid stream. He was not to be found. The current had borne him downwards, and a water-dog, which was kept on purpose on board, was in the act, as I perceived, of dragging the body ashore. I assisted the animal, and got the credit of saving my friend.

"I need not delay you longer. I married Mr Syme's daughter, and succeeded, at his death, to the whole concern, which I have just wound up; and, having left my wife and an only daughter in London, I am on my way to visit, by surprise, my aged mother, who still lives in the place of my birth, and to purchase, if possible, a property in the neighbourhood, there to spend, in peace, and affection, and domestic love, the evening of my days.—Will you go with me to Lastcairn?"

I agreed. We drove up the glen, by Croalchapel; and

my friend was all absence, and inward rumination, and anticipated delight. But the footsteps of death were on the threshold. His aged parent was still alive and sensible, but manifestly fast going. She was made sensible that her long-lost Charlie, who had been so kind to her in her old age, was before her. She tried to stretch forth her withered arm, but it was scathed by death. She received the last embrace of her son, said something about "depart in peace," and fell asleep.

THE POOR SCHOLAR.

Reader, if ever thou hast been in "Babylon the Great," or, in other words, in the overgrown metropolis of the southern portion of these kingdoms, peradventure you have observed melancholy-looking men, their countenances tinged with the "pale cast of thought," in suits of well-worn black, "a world too wide," creeping, edging, or shuffling along the streets, each belike with a bundle of papers peering from his pocket. In nine cases out of ten, these neglected-looking men are the poor scholars who instruct or amuse the world. You may also find them, with anxiety in their eyes, and hunger sitting at home upon their cheeks, wandering in the most secluded corners of the parks, enjoying, by way of a substitute for dinner, the apology which the air in the parks offers for the pure and unadulterated breath of heaven. Daily, too, they may be seen in the library of the Museum, poring over an old volume, and concealing their shoes beneath the table, lest they should "prate" of the scholar's "whereabouts," and ask of the venerable volume, "Are you or we oldest?" Or you may find them in the corner of some obscure coffee-house, poring intently over the periodicals of the day, at intervals slowly sipping and mincing the cup of coffee and half slice of bread before them. But, in speaking of poor scholars generally, I keep you from the tale of our Poor Scholar.

You have heard of Longtown, which is a neat, respectable-looking, and remarkably clean little town in Cumberland, on the banks of the Esk, near to what is called Solway Moss, and sometimes spoken of as the first or last town in England, in the same manner as Coldstream is

mentioned as the first or last town in Scotland. Well, there dwelt in Longtown a respectable widow, named Musgrave. She derived an income of about eighty pounds a-year from a property that had been bequeathed to her in the West Indies. She had an only son, whose name was Robert, and who, after a respectable education in his native place, was bound as an apprentice to a medical practitioner in Carlisle. He afterwards attended the classes in Edinburgh; but, before he had taken out all the necessary tickets, and before he had obtained the diploma or qualification which was to enable him to use the word "surgeon" after his name, something went wrong about the property that was bequeathed to his mother in the West Indies; her remittances ceased, and, after a tedious lawsuit, it was swallowed up altogether.

She was left in poverty — in utter destitution. The misfortune fell upon her heavily; she drooped, pined, mourned, and died; and Robert Musgrave, still under twenty, was left without money and without friends. His talents, however, had excited the notice of several of the professors under whom he had studied; and they, acquiring a knowledge of his circumstances, and feeling an interest in his fate, enabled him to take out his certificate as a member of the College of Surgeons.

He now, with high hopes, and, I need not say, a low pocket, commenced practice as a country surgeon in a small village on the Borders. It was a young man's dream. A surgeon in a country village, and especially a young one, is generally the worst paid man in it. The war between poverty and the necessity of appearing respectable never ceases. The clergyman, be he churchman or dissenter, has a certain income, be it less or more; but the surgeon lives between the hand and the mouth; and he can hardly, considering his avocation, in Christian benevolence, pray for "daily bread." Such a prayer would be something akin to

a gravedigger's for an east wind or a "green Christmas;" which, as the adage hath it, "maketh a fat kirkyard."

Now, Robert Musgrave was a young man, possessed not only of what may be called talent, but, what is more, of strong and ardent genius; while, young as he was, his professional skill would have done honour to a court physician. But, buried in the obscurity of a poor and secluded village, struggling between gentility and penury, shut out from all society congenial to his taste, education, and former habits, he became heartless and callous, if not slovenly; and, eventually, he sank into a sceptic from the *force of appearance.* For, be assured, gentle reader, if ye will study mankind closely, and examine into their outgoings and their incomings, and think of the *why* for every *wherefore,* ye will find that the reasoning of a shabby coat produces more converts to everyday free-thinking or infidelity, than the philosophy of Hobbes, the rhetoric of Shaftesbury, the wit of Voltaire, the sophistry of Hume, and the blackguard ribaldry of Paine, united. The neighbouring farmers admitted Doctor Musgrave, as they called him, to be clever; but they despised his poverty, and invited him to their tables only for amusement. Deprived of books, and without society, while his temperament was framed for both, and feeling himself slighted, he gradually lost his respectability, and became a tippler, if not a drunkard.

I shall here follow out a portion of his history, in a conversation which he had with a Cumberland farmer, one Peter Liddell, whom he met in London about three years after he had left his country practice on the Borders:—

"The longer I remained in ——," said he, "my situation became the more painful. I felt I was becoming something less than the equal of society I despised. I found that I had gradually sunk into the odious vice of drunkenness; that I was the companion only of the ignorant and the worthless; and poverty, eternal poverty and obscurity, were

all that appeared before me. But the dormant ambition of boyhood, the dreams that delighted my early years, did not wholly forsake me. I had long determined to leave the village, and try my fortune in the world; but want of means prevented me. I resolved to tear adversity by the beard, and face every obstacle. With difficulty I gathered in as many debts as enabled me to proceed to Newcastle, and take a passage to London, where I arrived on the first of February, without friends, and almost without money—in fact, with not five shillings in my pocket."

"Poor fellow!" said Peter; and they were sitting together in a tavern in Fleet Street, which is called a north-country house; for Peter was in London on business, and having met the doctor on the street, they went into the tavern to talk of their native hills, and the "old familiar faces." "Poor fellow!" added Peter; and, with a sort of sigh, added, "Ah, sirs! it is really well said that the one half of the world doesna know how the other lives. It would take planning to lay out those five shillings."

"It certainly did," said the scholar. "You are aware that my practice in the village, from a prejudice against what some called my religion, or rather my no religion, was exceedingly limited. In fact, I was a persecuted man, for principles of which I was as ignorant as themselves; and disdaining to accommodate my habits and conversation to their rules, the persecution increased, and the payments made to me became more limited than my practice. I bade fair to become an actual representative of Shakspere's apothecary; and would assuredly have thought myself 'passing rich with forty pounds a-year.' But the one-half of my practice would not pay the expense of wrapping the powders in paper. On sending to our village tobacconist's, I have had my own accounts returning as snuff-paper; and, though my success was not, I believe, inferior to most in the profession, my patients regarded paying me as throwing money

away, or as an unnecessary charity; and never did the payments, taking one year with another, exceed thirty pounds."

"Poor fellow! do ye really say so?" responded Peter; "thirty pounds a-year!—and was that a'? And was ye really not an atheist or a deist, doctor, as the people gied ye out to be?"

"Whatever I and the mass of mankind are in our practice, Mr Liddell," he replied, "I am neither, when the small still voice of conscience speaks."

"Gie's your hand—gie's your hand, doctor," cried Peter; "I ask your pardon for onything I ever thought or said respecting ye, as sincerely as ever man did. Conscience is, as ye say, a sma still voice; but I doubt it is one that many will hear aboon the sough o' friends at a death-bed, the thunders o' the day o' judgment, and the roaring and raging o' the bottomless pit. But ye say that ye had barely five shillings in your pocket when ye arrived in London here. How, in a' the world, did ye manage to lay it out?'

"Sixpence," replied the scholar, "went in treating the captain to a glass of grog, when we came on shore, including one for myself."

"That was very foolishly spent, however," interrupted Peter.

"And it being night when we landed, "added the doctor, "another shilling was spent in the public-house for a bed."

"A bed!" exclaimed our Cumberland farmer. "Man, had ye not the gumption to sleep aboord, or gie the captain the hint, after treating him wi' the glass. That was eighteenpence clean thrown awa'; and only left ye wi' three-and-saxpence. Poor soul! what did ye do?"

"Beginning to reflect in the morning," said the other, "that three-and-sixpence was not an inexhaustible sum, I agreed to pass over the very useful ceremony of a breakfast; and, strolling about, planning what to do, and marvell-

ing at all I saw—after narrowly escaping being jostled to pieces, as I moved slowly from street to street, while every soul in the great city appeared to be walking for a wager but myself—towards three o'clock I dined in an eating-house, for sixpence, by the side of a coalheaver. The afternoon was also passed in dreamy wandering. After nightfall, I became dispirited and fatigued. I was still unable to form any definite plan of proceeding, and I more than once asked myself what I had come to London to do."

"Poor man! I doubt there are too many like ye," said Peter.

"I was satiated with the busy variety of the scene," he continued; "the very changes became as sameness, and I longed only for a place where I might lie down and rest. I obtained a lodging for the night, in a suspicious-looking public-house, for a sixpence; and rising early on the following morning, my second day in London was spent as the first had been, and at the same expense, save a penny—for on that day my dinner cost me but fivepence. My two shillings and a penny were now sacred, and I feared to incur the expense of a night's lodgings. I was passing what I discovered to be Covent Garden. Crowds were pressing into the theatre. I stood and ran my eyes over the playbill. I saw the names, Kemble! Cooke! Bannister! Siddons!—The temptation was irresistible."

"Irresistible!" cried Peter; "what the mischief do ye mean? I see naething irresistible in the case, unless ye just mean to tell me that ye are a born fool."

"Siddons! Kemble! Cook! and Bannister!" proceeded our hero, "on the same boards, and on the same night! I thought myself transported to Elysium! I looked for the word *Gallery*, pressed forward with the eager crowd, and threw down my shilling. 'Another shilling, sir,' said the man of checks. I had followed the stream of the two-shilling gallery, and thus ——"

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the farmer, raising his hands. "did ever man in his right judgment hear the like o' that? —ye're no to be pitied! I wonder ye didna think o' buying a strait-jacket!—ye was fitter for it than a play-house. Doctor, I didna think ye had been such an idiot. But I must say that some mothers bring fools into the world after a'. Did ye really no turn back again?—or what did ye do wi' your last penny? It would be thrown away as wisely as the two shillings, I reckon."

"I plead guilty," said Robert; "I acted as a fool, but bore the consequence like a philosopher. My last shilling had disappeared. The performance proceeded—I was delighted, enraptured, overwhelmed. The curtain dropped. The house was crowded to suffocation—my throat was parched—and with my last penny—(keep your seat, Mr Liddell)—with my last penny I bought an orange from a fruit-seller in the gallery. The second piece was concluded. The human mass moved every one to the tavern or their homes, a supper and a pillow, and I—I alone of the thousands—went forth penniless into the streets, hungry, shivering, and fatigued, to wander without hope!"

"And served ye right," said Peter. "I dinna pity ye, sir. No, no; after that, I'm done wi' ye. But how did ye get through the night?"

"The day dawned," resumed Robert Musgrave, "and I was still wandering—fainting, trembling, cold, and benumbed. I had long had some pretensions to literature. I was born in the midst of poetry. It sang around me from the deathless voices of my native Esk, hymning to its green woods and its massy crags. It looked down upon me from the thunder-belted brows of my native mountains, and drew my soul upwards to itself. It grew with my growth, it became a part of my being, and, in the midst of my debasement, it parted not from me."

"Famous! famous!—drat, ye're an orator, doctor!" cried

the farmer, in admiration of the eloquent fervour of his countryman. "Cumberland—and where is the county like it? I wish, doctor, I had been a bishop for your sake—ye should have had a benefice."

"My luggage," continued the other, "consisted only of a chest containing little beyond books and manuscripts. With the same feeling which every author may be supposed to have for his productions, I considered mine were not inferior to others which were puffed and published. I say puffed and published; for, now-a-days, it is common for a puff to be both written and published before the work bepraised is in the hands of the printer."

"Coom, now, Maister Musgrave," said the farmer, "not so fast, if you please; I can believe anything that's possible in a reasonable way. But how a book can be praised before it be read and printed, or, as I should say, before it is a book, I canna comprehend. So ye mustna come over me in that way, doctor."

"It is not so impossible as you imagine," replied the other; "you know that money is a powerful agent."

"Ay, troth do I," said the farmer; "now I understand ye; I know

> 'That money makes the mare to go,
> Whether she has legs or no.'"

"Well," resumed the surgeon, "laying the hope of fame and reward as an unction to my wounded spirit, I returned to the vessel, and, intrusting my trunk to the care of a wharfinger, I took from it a bundle of manuscripts—consisting of a novel, poems, essays, and papers on medical subjects—and, with a beating heart, proceeded towards Paternoster Row, praying as I went. I passed every bookseller's in the street, measuring the countenance of himself and his shopman. At length, after passing and repassing several doors a dozen times, as often having my feet upon their thresholds, half drawing my papers from my pocket and

thrusting them back again, I ventured into one; and, after a few words awkwardly expressed, holding the manuscripts in my hands, I made known my business. The gentleman, without looking at my productions, but not without looking at me, said his hands were full, and hurried back to his desk. I called on six others; and though my reception with some was more courteous, my success was the same. I applied to the eighth and last. A glimmering of hope returned with the first glance of his countenance. It was not what every one would term inviting; but genuine feeling glowed through a garb of roughness. He received me with politeness, looked over my papers, delicately asked me a few questions, which I neither knew how to answer nor how to evade; he hinted his fears that I had written on subjects which were not exactly in demand in the market, and, in conclusion, requested me to leave the manuscripts, and call on him on the following morning. I again went into the streets, to hold battle with hunger and anticipation. For several hours, hope and hope's fond dreams bore me up; but towards evening, and throughout the night, the wind blew cold and wildly, the rain fell unceasingly. I was drenched and almost motionless, and but for the interference of the patrols, I would fain have lain down to sleep, beneath the cover of a passage, on the damp earth."

"Oh, help us!" said Peter, "what is that o't! I know as well what it is to travel by night, and in a' weathers, as anybody; but, poor man! I had none o' your sufferings to contend wi'."

"The longed-for and yet dreaded hour arrived," resumed the other. "I approached the shop with feelings as anxious, and not more enviable, than those of a criminal when he is dragged to the bar. The publisher was out upon business, and one of his young men returned me my manuscripts, and a letter, with his master's compliments and thanks. I do not remember leaving the shop. The stupefaction of

death was dashed upon my soul. I believe that I appeared tranquil; but it was the tranquillity of misery immoveable beneath its own load. In despair, I broke open the letter—a guinea fell from its folds at my feet."

"Heaven bless him!" interrupted the farmer.

"Amen!" responded the scholar, and continued: "Without waiting to read the contents of his note, I hurried into a tavern, to allay the cravings of hunger, and to warm, or rather thaw, my almost frozen body. But I sickened, and could eat little. I had wanted food until, like a spoiled child, my appetite refused that for which it had yearned. With the still open letter upon my knee, as my joints began to feel the influence of returning heat, I suddenly sank, with my head upon my bosom, into a deep, dreamless sleep; and, being awoke by the rioting of some half-drunken men, I found one of them had made free with the back part of my letter to light his pipe, which had been addressed, after the usual silly and absurd fashion common amongst literary men—who ought rather to set an example in despising vain frivolities—*R. Musgrave, Esq.* 'I beg your pardon, *Squire*,' said the fellow, in a tone of irony. 'Here's wishing you a pair of new shoes, and health to wear them, *Squire*,' said a third, in the same tone, raising a tankard to his lips. And the party broke into a laugh of derision."

"Doctor!" exclaimed the farmer, indignantly, "ye deserved all ye got, if ye didna make a broom o' the bunch o' them, and sweep the house wi' the hair o' their heads."

"I am not remarkable for brooking insults," added Musgrave, "and of that more than one of the company had cause to be convinced. In his letter, the bookseller spoke of my writings as displaying considerable originality and genius. Parts of them, he thought, exhibited marks of being written too hastily, and recommended their omission. He regretted that he durst not hazard their publication; as, unfortunately, too much depended upon patronage, connection,

or the influence of a name. He recommended publishing by subscription, and brought forward the example of Pope, Burns, and others, to render the advice palatable, as children receive sweetmeats after acid drugs. He begged to enclose a guinea for two copies to himself; and, wishing me success, he said it would afford him pleasure, by every means in his power, to forward the publication. I will not exhaust your patience by a recital of calamities which a critic, ignorant of their meaning, or ashamed to look back on them, would pronounce vulgar, and in bad taste. Being contented with the luxury of half a bed, for which I paid sixpence, I experienced the truth of the proverb, that 'misery maketh a man acquainted with strange bedfellows.' Beggars, thieves, men of all nations, and of all climes and colours, shared my pillow. But I resolved to husband my guinea, indulging myself with sleeping one night, and wandering the streets the next, alternately. It was in vain, in the meantime, that I used every effort to obtain the situation of assistant-surgeon. In London, more, perhaps, than in any city, appearance is everything; and I carried my own condemnation written on my ruined garments."

"Troth, I have remarked there is some truth in what ye say, doctor," said the farmer; "if a man wishes to prosper, he should never, if possible, appear like a shorn sheep wi' the fleece bare on his back."

"My money," added the scholar, "was again reduced to five shillings; and to ward off the approach of starvation, I was compelled to renounce the comforts of a bed once in forty-eight hours, as a luxury I could no longer afford. The very shoes left my feet with ceaseless wandering. My feet bled as I walked. My hat became shapeless; I was ashamed to look on it. The wind began to sport through my garments, and found loopholes for his sport. My person became like a moving spirit of famine, clothed with poverty, and shivering in a storm. My spirit was not broken, but it

was bowed down. Yielding to the hope of despair, I attempted publishing by subscription. The plan may succeed where a man is known, where he has friends to push the subscription for him, or where he has impudence that is proof against insult; but, amongst strangers, it is a hopeless task. I was doomed to endure indignities from ignorant and contemptible menials, who, glancing at my figure, thrust the doors in my face, as on a common beggar! O sir! the recollection haunts me still. It is the only act of my life on which I cannot think without a burning blush coming over my face. I need not say it was unsuccessful. For thirty successive nights I wandered through the streets of this city, exposed to the storms of February and the bleak winds of March, sleeping as I moved along, or standing, and knowing not that I stood, till aroused by the jest of a passing unfortunate, or rudely driven on by the watchman of the night. Ten times in the hour, I would stumble beneath the oppression of sleep to the ground. But I will not detail those days and nights of misery. The scenes I then encountered would provoke a smile and a tear at the same moment. They were a mingling of the ludicrous and the wretched. Yet, to give you but one or two instances out of many:—One cold and weary night, sleep came upon me like death itself. I was wandering along Thames Street, and came to Billingsgate. Porters and oyster-sellers were lounging about the market, some sitting smoking, laughing, or drinking, though it was not an hour past midnight. I sought shelter beneath the sheds, and stretched myself upon one of the tables or benches. But the cold was intense. My very blood seemed freezing. I arose and removed to a corner of the market over the side of the river, and there, there was one of the open shops, stalls, or sheds, the one side of which was screened by a large and loosely-hanging canvas sign, facing the river, of more than six feet square, setting forth the occupant of the stall as fishmonger, oyster-dealer, and so forth. Through

the lamplight and starlight, I cast a longing and envious look at the loose and painted canvas. I took it down, and stretched myself upon the bench, spread it over me as a blanket. It was the most comfortable covering I had had for many nights. But scarce had sleep, which pressed heavily upon me, sealed up my eyelids, when I was aroused by a rude hand shaking me by the shoulder, and a ruder voice exclaiming, 'Holloa! who have we got here?' It was the proprietor of the shed. I started—rubbed my eyes—stammered out an apology. A crowd of fishwomen and porters gathered round us. The fishmonger spoke of calling for the police. I expostulated. He offered to hold me. I raised my hand, and I am thankful that his table, which was a fixture, was between him and the river. I rushed through the crowd; and whether the blow which I had lent the fishmonger operated upon their courage and humanity, I cannot tell, but they made way for me. I had not, however, proceeded far, when sleep again became too much for me, and too literally I 'caught myself tripping.' Its influence was irresistible, and St Paul's had not yet chimed the hour of three. I saw a cart standing beneath an open gateway; and, with gratitude in my heart, I lay down on it as a couch of luxury. But there I had not lain long when I was awoke by a person at my side. I started.

"'Don't be afraid, sir,' said the intruder; 'it is only a poor brother in misfortune!'

"I turned round and glanced at him through the dim light, but scarce could I discover what manner of man he was, till sleep again 'locked up my senses in forgetfulness.' A little after daybreak, I awoke, shivering, my joints stiff, my teeth chattering together, and my whole body a mass of pain. I perceived that my 'poor brother in misfortune' was, or rather I ought to say had been, dressed respectably, yea, even fashionably. He carried with him a portfolio, which even in his sleep he pressed closely beneath his arm.

As I arose he awoke; and groaning, he arose also and accompanied me. I know not whether it was mutual wretchedness, or the portfolio beneath his arm, that caused me to feel a regard for him at the first glance; but certain it is I was prepossessed in his favour. We were a couple of strange, miserable-looking characters, as we went drowsily, laggardly, and lamely up Fish Street Hill together. I observed the night-watchmen, who had not left their beat, turned round, and even held up their lanterns—though the morning's light was well advanced—and examined us as we passed. As though our errand or our thoughts were the same, we proceeded towards the Park together; and when the sun arose, he opened his portfolio, and exhibited it to me. He was an artist, and an artist, too, of high promise. His portfolio contained many bold and vigorous pencil sketches, where soul, taste, and a daring hand were exemplified. He had also a number of beautiful pieces in water-colours, which showed that his touch was delicate as well as bold. I took my pencil, and wrote a few lines on the back of one of the Bristol boards on which one of the subjects was sketched, and the artist and I became friends. Neither of us had wherewith to purchase a breakfast; but, in the forenoon, he had to call upon a printseller in the Strand with some of his pieces in water-colours, and we parted with a promise to meet again on the following day. But an accident, which I shall afterwards mention, prevented me from keeping my engagement; and we parted without the one knowing the name of the other. I have not again met with him; but, until this hour, I regret that I learned not the name of a young artist, whom I met with under such circumstances, and whose productions manifested high genius, a correct taste, and a skilful hand. Now, at this period, sir, I should tell you that the greater part of the day was generally spent in attempts to sleep upon the seats in the Park; and, dreadful as the pangs of hunger were, at

length (and this is no idle saying), I could have been content to die beneath their rage, to have purchased but one hour of rest and repose. The agony of hunger yields to the agony of sleep."

"And do you really say, doctor," inquired the farmer, "that ye have suffered a' this in a Christian land, even in this city? I hardly think it possible."

"Some may doubt it," replied Robert, earnestly; "but the remembrance of what I have endured will live as a coal of fire in my heart for ever; and the fiftieth part of what I suffered has not been told you. But, sir, before I proceed farther with my story, allow me to go back to another part of my history, and advert to another circumstance. You will remember—it is more than a dozen years ago—a military gentleman, whom we generally called Colonel Forster, took up his residence on the banks of the Esk, a few miles from Longtown. He was, I believe, a lieutenant-colonel in the service of the East India Company."

"I remember him perfectly well, Mr Musgrave," said the farmer, "and know him yet; and, moreover, I also remember that ye was particularly fond of his daughter Bertha, and that it was said that it wasna her beauty ye was in love wi', but her siller; for the colonel was understood to be a perfect nabob, and I have heard that he forbade you to come about the house."

"Sir," continued Musgrave—and there was a glow of indignation on his countenance—"I care not what the world may have said, nor what they do say. The lark greeteth not the dawning of the dawn with more fervent delight than I first beheld the fair countenance of Bertha Forster. I knew not that her father was rich, and, when I did know it, I grieved that he was so. But to me she plighted her first vow, and pledged her 'maiden troth;' and, though I knew that, by her fulfilling it, I should take the hand of a penniless bride—for it is true that her father threatened to

disinherit her if she kept my company, and to leave all that he was possessed of to a son in India—yet I loved her the more. I loved her for herself, and our feelings were reciprocal. Ever shall I remember the night on which we parted, previous to my leaving Cumberland for this city. It was in a deep wood, near her father's house. The Esk murmured by our feet, and the grey twilight fell over us. The evening-star was in the heavens; and the wood, the star, the river, and the twilight, were the witnesses of our tears and of our vows. But you are past the period of life when the recital of such things can be interesting; and respect for her whom my soul worships forbids me to say more. Yet, although her father despised and spurned me, we parted with a promise to write to each other, with a declaration to preserve our plighted vows inviolate even unto death. It was agreed that I should send my letters to her, addressed to a humble but mutual friend. But I was long in London ere I wrote; for I had not the means of writing; and, when an answer came to that letter—oh! I never knew real misery till then! She knew not the depth of my wretchedness—the extremeness of my poverty! I beheld my name on the board at the post-office amongst the list of persons whose residence could not be found. Day after day I visited it, and stood with my eyes fixed upon my own name, while my heart was ready to burst with agony and anxiety. I knew the letter was from my Bertha; but I had not the few pence necessary to relieve it. I had no means of obtaining them. I was a penniless, houseless stranger, unknown to every one in this vast city. And, after gazing on the board till my eyes were dimmed by rising tears, and my brain excited almost to madness, I was wont to flee from the city; and often, in solitude and in darkness, pour forth the bitterness of my spirit to the night winds. Often, at such times, in the excess of misery, I have wrung my hands together, and exclaimed aloud—

"'What would my poor Bertha think if she knew this!'

"At length the list of names amongst which mine appeared was removed from the post-office and replaced by others; and when, after obtaining the means of paying for the letter, I made inquiry after it, I was informed that it had been returned. I doubted not but that she would imagine I had forgotten her; and, as I turned away in disappointment and in hopelessness, I said unto myself, 'Farewell, my Bertha!'"

"Help us, doctor!" exclaimed Peter; "is it really possible that anybody can have been so put about for a thirteenpence matter! Yet, how do we fling away shilling after shilling, day after day, without ever thinking o' the road they are going! And how ready we are to say about anything, 'Oh, it was only a shilling!' But, doctor, when ye think what a relief 'only a shilling' would have given to your mind at that moment, surely ye will have considered weel the length and breadth o' every sixpence ye have spent since then. It will be a lesson to me, however, to be more cautious how I ever spend thirteenpence again; and, if I find myself ready to fling it away on any unwiselike or unprofitable purposes, I will just think—'What good will what I am going to do wi' my money do me?—and what would Doctor Musgrave have given for it, when he saw the letter from his sweetheart, and hadna the thirteenpence to open it?' As sure as death!—as we used to say at school, and that is gay sure—had any other body told me what ye have said but yoursel, I would have laughed at it. Had I read it in print, I wouldna have believed it. But there is one thing in it, and that is, it just shows us what poor dependent creatures we are one upon another. Doctor, ye had a sair trial there for a sma' matter."

"You, sir," continued Mr Musgrave, "no doubt consider London an immense, almost a limitless city; but, sir, it is too small for the bounds of misery. Often have I wandered

from Knightsbridge to Mile End, yea, from Cheswick to the East India Docks, and slowly returned the way I came, thinking that daylight would never break, and wondering how people spoke of London as a great city. They, sir, who would really know the limits of London, must shake hands with misery as I have done. They must wander its streets by night, without food and without hope, and they will marvel how short they are. People talk of losing themselves amongst the intricacies and many turnings of this city. It is nonsense, sir—sheer stupidity. Let them once be lost in misery, in penniless, houseless wretchedness, and should a purse show itself at their feet, they would discover where they were in a moment. The man who has no money never loses himself in London—none do but fools who have it to lose. But, sir, it was on the very night after I had attempted to sleep in Billingsgate, beneath the comfortable covering of a fishmonger's sign, and dreamed by the side of an artist in a drayman's cart, that I was wandering on the borough side of the river, and had proceeded nearly three miles beyond the Elephant and Castle, when cries for assistance roused me from my waking dream. I rushed forward. A gentleman in an open carriage, with his servant, were attacked by four footpads, armed with knives and bludgeons. I took up a stone from the road, and, hurling it at the head of one of the robbers, when within a few yards of them, stretched him on the ground. We were then man to man. I sprang upon another—I grappled with him, overpowered him, and wrenched the bludgeon from his hands, but not until he had plunged his knife into my side. It was a bad wound, but not a dangerous one. With the bludgeon which I had wrenched from the hand of the robber, I rushed upon another of his associates, who, I found, had that moment overcome the gentleman to whose rescue I had providentially arrived. I dealt him a heavy and a hearty blow upon his busiest arm, which causing him to find that he had only

his limbs left, he took to his heels and ran. The two whom I had already overthrown, had anticipated him in his flight, and, on seeing him run, the fourth followed their example. I attempted to run after them, but fell upon the ground from loss of blood. The gentleman was himself wounded, but slightly; and he, with his servant, raising me from the ground, and placing me in his carriage, conveyed me to the nearest inn. There, after a surgeon had been sent for, and my wound dressed, he requested to know who I was, and to whom he was indebted for his liberty and his life. But in all that concerned myself I was silent; and, in answer to all questions as to whom or what I was, I was dumb. My wound was deep, though not dangerous; and all that I regretted was, that I should be left an invalid in an inn, while I had nothing to recompense those who attended on me. After earnestly entreating to know who I was, or what was my name—though I have reason to believe that, from my dejected appearance, he entertained a most sorry idea of me—the gentleman whom I had rescued proceeded onwards to London. But I was silent to all his inquiries. Pride sealed up my tongue, and I shook my head and said nothing. I could not speak—shame and poverty tortured me more than my wound.

"Within an hour he proceeded on his journey; and, on the following day, he returned with a medical gentleman to visit me. It was with difficulty that I could sit up in my bed to welcome them. The man of surgery began by asking many questions, which I answered like a true Scotsman, by asking others which startled him; and I heard him whisper to him whom I had rescued—

"'Sir, he is, without doubt, a member of my profession.'

"The gentleman—I mean him whom I rescued from the ruffians—came forward to me; he took my hand in his—most earnestly he took it—and, as he held it, there was

something like a tear—a tear of gratitude—rolling in his eyes.

"'Sir,' said he, 'to your courage I owe my life. Allow me to ask by what name I shall call my deliverer. It is evident that you are not, or that you have not always been, what your present appearance bespeaks. Let me know, therefore, how I am to thank you—how I can reward you as I ought.'

"'Sir,' answered I, 'you are a stranger to me; so am I to you. Let us remain so. If you speak of reward, you will cause me to regret what I did in attempting your rescue. Whatever I am, whatever I have been, matters not. I saw a fellow-man attacked and overpowered, and I attempted to deliver him. The humblest animal, prompted by its instinct, would have done the same. I am entitled to no thanks for what I have done—and, above all, I wish no questions asked of me.'"

"Faith, doctor, ye answered nobly, and just as ye ought to have, if ye had had a hundred pounds in your pocket; but, man, ye stood in your ain light. There is nae saying what he might have done for you. It might hae been the king or the prime minister for onything ye kenned."

"He might," resumed the scholar; "but he rejoined, 'Sir, I admire the independence of your spirit, but wherefore should you, without cause, reject the acquaintance of one who seeks your friendship? You have endangered your life to save mine—what stronger claim could you have on my everlasting gratitude? If common feeling prompted you to rescue me, suffer me not to leave you until I have testified that I am actuated by such feelings, in common with yourself. You refuse to tell me your name; mine is William Forster, a colonel in the service of the East India Company.'

"At the mention of his name my heart leaped within me. The brother of my Bertha, and of whom I have spoken, was

in the service of the East India Company. I dreaded that he and the individual I had saved might be the same person; and I resolved, more determinedly than before, to conceal from him my name and circumstances. But, finding he could learn nothing from me, he offered me money. O sir! at that time I could have taken his life—I could have taken my own. To what have I sunk, I thought, or what am I now, that I should be treated as the veriest beggar that crawls upon the streets! 'Sir,' I exclaimed, wildly, 'keep your gold—your dross—your insulting dross. I did not assist you in your hour of need, that you should insult my situation by a mendicant's reward. I, sir, have the feelings of a gentleman as well as you, whatever I may now seem—therefore torment me not.' He informed me that he had to leave London on the following day; and he entreated that I would tell him who I was, that he might show that he was grateful for what I had done, in a way that might not be painful to my feelings. But the thought that he was the brother of my Bertha haunted me, maddened me, and I waved my hand to him and cried, 'Away! away!' His countenance bespoke him to be a man to whom I could have poured forth my whole soul; but even in that countenance I read her lineaments, and my soul moved like an agitated thing that I could feel within me, as I gazed on them.

"'Go, sir,' I exclaimed; 'and if you will be grateful, be so to one who rejoices in having been instrumental in assisting you. Leave me. I ask no more, for your questions torture me, and your pecuniary offers insult me.'

"He left me, but never did I behold a man part from another more reluctantly, or one who was more under the influence of strong emotion. My wound confined me to the inn for five weeks, and, during much of that time, my thoughts were distracted regarding the bill of the innkeeper. But one day he came to me and said—

"'Sir, I don't know how you and the gentleman whom

you rescued from the highwaymen stand; but one thing I know, he is a gentleman every inch of him. He has paid for all that you have had, or may have for a month to come; and here, master, are fifty pounds which he left me to give to you in as delicate a way as I could, for, as he said, you were rather proud-spirited. Now, master, here is the money, and he was as safe in trusting it in my hands as if he had put it in the bank.'

"I knew not what to do; but, after a struggle, and a severe one, I accepted the money. You may despise me for what I did ——"

"Me despise you!" cried the farmer; "for what, I would like to ken? It is the only wiselike action I have heard you say that you did. The man that would despise another for taking fifty pounds where it was deserved, is a being that doesna understand what money is, or what it was made for. They may despise ye that like, doctor, upon that account, but it winna be me."

"Well, sir," resumed Musgrave, "with the fifty pounds in my pocket, I again appeared upon the streets of London. But a change had passed over me. Even the policemen who before had ordered me to 'walk on' knew me not. I was another man—I was as one on whom fashion shed its sunning influence. I again endeavoured to obtain a situation as an assistant-surgeon, but the attempt was unsuccessful. I should have told you that it was owing to being confined with my wound that I was unable to meet my 'brother in misfortune,' the artist of whom I have spoken. I now tried my fortune as a writer for the magazines, and was paid for what I wrote even liberally, as I considered it. But there was one drawback attending this liberality: though I could write an article for which I received three, four, or seven guineas, in a day (for authors always calculate in guineas, though they are paid in pounds), yet it was not every day, neither was it every month, that I could get such an article

accepted; and it was not every magazine that admitted me as a contributor. But by such writing I managed to live; and, as my name became known, I felt less of the misery which I endured when I first embarked in the precarious trade of authorship. Yet a precarious trade I still found it to be. I was enabled to live, but I lived between the hand and the mouth.

"The publisher whom I have already mentioned as having given a guinea towards the publishing of my works by subscription, engaged me to translate a novel from the French, and a small work from the Italian, of which language I had but a scanty knowledge. But it does not require the perfect knowledge of a language to be a translator which many consider necessary."

"I canna say," said Peter; "I must confess ye are out o' my depths there—but get on wi' your story, for I'm not sure but I may have something to tell ye."

"Well, sir," resumed the scholar, "after the translations had appeared, and when the seductions of a literary life, notwithstanding all its privations and all its uncertainty, had induced me to abandon all thoughts of pursuing my own profession, I determined to write for the stage. It would be tedious for me to tell you of all the difficulties I had to encounter before I could obtain an audience of the theatrical managers, or what was called the committee of management. I found them more difficult of access than the Cham of Tartary. As well might I have undertaken a mission to Pekin, with the intent of pulling the celestial emperor by the button. But at length my object was attained. A tragedy that I had written was accepted, and announced for representation. The eventful night came. The new drama—my drama—was to be performed. The first scene went off in silence—in utter silence; and often the actors mangled the lines most miserably. They forgot Hamlet's advice. But, as the first act was concluded, pit, boxes, and gallery burst

into a tumult of applause. I was seated in the pit. The sweat broke upon my brow. Vanity wrought triumphantly in my bosom. I was the greatest man in London. The second, the third, the fourth, the fifth acts concluded in the same manner. The curtain fell, and the audience shouted, 'The author! the author!' For this tribute of public approbation I was not prepared. The stage-manager came to me, and still the audience in the gallery kept thundering and shouting, 'The author! the author!' He insisted that I should appear upon the stage, and before the audience. Vain as I was, I sickened at his words; but he took my hand, and led me forth. I became as a thing that moves, without a consciousness of, or a power over, its moving. I had become pale as death. They led me to what they call the green-room, and they put rouge upon my face. But it was in vain, and the cold sweat swept it away, and left my countenance as if covered with wounds. I was led upon the stage as a sheep is led to the slaughter. The lights flashed on me, and I beheld twice a thousand eyes fixed upon me. I knew not how to act. I trembled—bowed—threw my eyes in bewilderment over the multitude; but, as I was about to address them, on whom amongst that mixed assembly should my eyes fall, but on my Bertha! I started. A frenzy came upon me. I sprang towards the pit. Yet it is in vain for me to tell you, for I knew not what I did. She sat in a box immediately facing me. I heard a woman's scream; I knew it came from where she was. The multitude seemed rising, and moving around me, and every eye was on me. But I cannot describe to you what I felt or what I saw. I became unconscious. I knew only that I had seen her—that she was somewhere. There was a noise like that of many waters in my ears. My head went round —my eyes were blind. When I recovered, I was seated in the green-room, and the actors in their strange dresses surrounded me. They endeavoured to restore me to conscious-

ness, as though I had been a sickly maiden that had fainted in their arms; and when I did recover from the sickness and insanity that came over me—

"'Where—oh, where,' I cried, 'is my Bertha?'

"I remember not of having done so; but I have been told that I did. You may think, sir, that I acted wildly, as a madman, or as a fool; but, before you condemn, think of what I had endured—of my recent misery, and of my vanity when shout rose on shout, and the cry from the assembled thousands was—'The author! the author!' Such changes, sir, were enough to turn a steadier head than mine."

"For my part, doctor," said Peter, "I have no notion o' plays; I never saw one in my life, and I canna say that I a'thegither comprehend ye. But let me hear about Miss Bertha."

"All that I could learn concerning her was," resumed Musgrave, "that a young lady in the boxes had uttered a sudden scream as she beheld me and the strange bewilderment that came over me, but that she had immediately been conveyed away by her friends in a coach. This only have I been able to learn. But it was she. Though all else that took place is as a wreck upon my memory, I see her before me now as I at that moment beheld her; I see still her one wild look that entered my soul, and I yet hear her heart-piercing cry, which brought delirium upon me, and rendered me dead to every other sound. But, from that night, I have been able to hear no more concerning her. I have sought her in church and in chapel, in the theatres and in the public walks, but never again have I beheld her. Often also have I written to Cumberland; but my letters have remained unanswered or been returned. She had forsaken me, or she has been compelled to forsake me; for, when I last beheld her, her face still beamed with affection, and her wild and sudden cry was the offspring of an old but a still living affection."

"I hear, by what ye say, doctor," rejoined the farmer, "that ye are as fond o' Miss Bertha as ever. Now, as I said to ye before, I am not certain but what I have something that ye might wish to hear, to communicate to ye; and, before doing so, with your permission, I would just ask you one or two plain questions. Ye have told me a great deal of the miserable state ye was in after ye came to London, and I would just like to ask ye if ye are better off now, and how and in what respect ye are so? I trust, therefore, that ye will by no means think the question impertinent; for I assure you, it is for your sake that I ask it, and not for any gratification to mysel."

"Well, sir," answered the scholar, "to be as plain with you as you desire, I have shaken hands with privation, and left it upon the road, to form the acquaintance of those who may follow me; or, to be more plain with you, I found that literature was a good staff but a bad crutch; and, as I began to gather my feet, I used it accordingly. In a word, as my name became known amongst men, my labours became more and more profitable; and, three years ago, thinking that I had obtained the means of doing so, I made an attempt to resume my profession as a surgeon. For many months, it was but an attempt, and a hopeless one, too; but gradually practice dawned or crept upon me. I am now employed as well as other members of my profession are; and, with the assistance of my literary labours, I look back upon the penury with which I struggled, and wish it to remain where I left it. But, though I have known something of the moonshine of fame as it has scattered its rays upon my head, and felt also the influence of the warmer beams of profit as I began to bask in the sun of popularity, yet there was, and there is, one dark and unsunned spot in my heart—and that is, the remembrance of my Bertha. Still does imagination conjure up her sudden glance, her one wild cry and look of agony, as I came forward to receive the plaudits of the

multitude, when, as the bay-leaves were circling my brow, the prickly brier was rudely drawn across my bosom."

"Well, doctor," said Peter, "ye have not just spoken so plain as I could have wished; but I dare to say that I comprehend ye. When ye eat a meal now, ye ken where the next is to come from; and if Miss Bertha still thinks o' ye, and were to gie you her hand, there would be no likelihood o' her being brought in contact with the privations with which ye have manfully struggled, and which, I am happy to hear (and, I may say, more happy to perceive—for a person's own eyes are excellent witnesses), ye have overcome. Now, sir, hearken to me, for I have something to tell ye. I had always a sort of liking for ye, doctor; and though I did see ye foolish and stupid in many things, yet I was sorry for ye, and I said I believed that ye was a lad o' real genius, and of a right heart at the bottom. More than that, I said, that, if ye minded your hand, ye would be heard tell of in the world—and I have not been mistaken, for, even down in Cumberland, we have seen your name in the papers; and a hundred times have I said to my neighbours—'I always told ye that lad would rise to something.' But now, sir—now to the main subject, the one in which you will feel the greatest interest. Ye say that ye again and again wrote to Miss Bertha to Cumberland, and never got an answer. I am in no way surprised at that at all; and for this simple reason, that old Colonel Forster left Eskside five years ago, and went to reside near a place they call Elstree, about ten miles from this city. Now, the way in which I am acquainted with the circumstance is this:—About a year after ye left, the old nabob, as we used to ca' him, bought the farm that I rented, and became my landlord. Therefore, when he came to live in this quarter, I had to send my rents here. But, sir, he understands that I am in London—for I just handed him my rent, being here, the other day—and he has invited me to dine wi' him at his house to-morrow. Now,

sir, if ye hae nae objections, I will just tak you out wi' me as an old friend; and if ye're not made welcome, I shall not be welcome either. So, say the word—will ye go wi' me, or will ye not?"

"I will—yes, yes, I will!" answered Mr Musgrave, eagerly.

"Well, well," said Peter, "there need be no more about it, then—say that I meet you at this house to-morrow at two o'clock."

"Agreed," replied the other.

"But," returned Peter, "there is one thing I forgot to tell ye, and that is, that I understand Miss Bertha is on the eve of being married, and highly married, too, they say wi' us. Therefore, ye will not be surprised if ye find your former acquaintance forgotten, or seemingly forgotten, which, in such matters, amounts to somewhat about the same thing."

On the following day, Mr Peter Liddell and Robert Musgrave entered a cab in Fleet Street together, and proceeded towards Elstree.

"Now," said Peter, as they approached the residence of his landlord, "I believe that I may be running my head against a wall; for I am well aware that the old colonel never liked ye. Ye are one who would be unwelcome at any time, but doubly so at a time like this, when his daughter is on the point of being married. But I will tell ye what it is—I am just as independent as he is. I am as able to live without the help o' the landlord, as the landlord is to live without the help o' the tenant. Therefore, if he puts down his brows at you when we are introduced, I will show him the back o' my coat, and so good-day to him."

"I believe, then," said Musgrave, "that with him I shall be no welcome guest; but, if Bertha welcome me, it is enough. You have spoken to me of her intended marriage—be it so. If she has forgotten me, if she has ceased to

care for me, I will look upon her and bless her, in remembrance of days which have passed away as the shadow of a cloud passeth over the earth. But with that blessing hope will depart; for, sir, it was the remembrance of her that sustained me in all my struggles. It was the hope that she might, would one day be mine, that induced me to hope against hope, to wrestle with despair. For her sake only have I sought for fame, as a miser would seek after hidden treasure; and when it began to throw its light and its sunniness over me, she was the flower that rendered sunlight beautiful—for what is there lovely in light but as a thing which maketh the face of the earth fair to look upon?"

They drew up at the door of the colonel's residence, and were ushered into a room where he and a party of his friends sat. Peter, who was what people in the south would call a '*cute* man, was beginning to make an apology, saying—

"I beg your pardon, colonel, for the liberty I have taken; but meeting with my old friend, Doctor Musgrave, yesterday, I prevailed on him to come out wi' me, as we were a' Cumberland folk together; and though he is a great man now ——"

But, while Peter spoke, one of the company started forward. He grasped our hero by the hand, and exclaimed—

"My deliverer! Long and anxiously have I sought for you; but, until this hour, nothing have I been able to learn respecting you. Father," he added, "this is the gentleman of whom a hundred times you have heard me speak, as having at the peril of his own life saved mine. I have never known or met him again until now. Thank him with me." And, as he spoke, he held the doctor's hand between his.

The old man rose. He evidently laboured to speak to the stranger; but other feelings obtained the mastery. He

stretched out his hand. He touched Robert Musgrave's—he coldly bowed to him. The blood left his face.

"Father," exclaimed the son, "you are ill. Hath gratitude ——" But he paused as he beheld the expression of his father's features. They betrayed anger and agony at the same moment.

"Son," said he, "I would speak with you: that man—that man;" and he pointed to the scholar impatiently, and, beckoning to his son, rose to leave the room.

"Sir," said Musgrave, proudly, "if my presence trouble you, I can withdraw."

"My friend, what mean you?—what means my father?" asked the brother of Bertha, who was, indeed, the same individual that the scholar had rescued.

"I dinna ken," answered Peter Liddle; "but, if Doctor Musgrave go the door, I go to the door too."

The father and the son looked at each other. The glance of the latter sought from the former an explanation.

At that instant the door opened, and the much-talked-of Bertha entered the room.

"Bertha!" exclaimed Musgrave, and stepped forward, as if unconscious of what he did.

"Robert!" she rejoined, clasping her hands together. She started—she fell back; her brother supported her in his arms.

"Bertha!—father!—friend!" he exclaimed, hastily glancing to each as he spoke, "what means this?"

A man of middle age rose, and, as he hurried from the room, said—

"Farewell, Forster," addressing the old man; "you have deceived, you have insulted me. The man who is to be your daughter's husband is with her now."

It was the intended husband of Bertha that so spoke, and left the apartment. The old colonel rose to follow him.

"Stay, father," said his son; "what I have now witnessed

requires an explanation. This stranger, to whom I owe my life, you have seen before—my sister has seen him—and there is something connected with your acquaintance with each other that I must understand."

"Yes," cried the old man, "I have seen him before—I have—I have."

"Bertha?" said his son; but she raised her hands before her face and wept.

"Sir," said the younger Forster, "I can be grateful. Though I am not acquainted with you, my sister is. Let me call my deliverer *brother!*" And he took the hand of his weeping sister and placed it in that of Robert Musgrave.

The old man started; but his son soothed him. And Robert Musgrave stood with the hand of Bertha Forster locked in his; and within a few weeks he called that hand his own, and was happy—and the sufferings that the Poor Scholar had endured became as a tale that is told.

THE LAIRD OF DARNICK TOWER.*

"Red glared the beacon on Pownell—
On Eildon there were three;
The bugle-horn on muir and fell
Was heard continually."—JAMES HOGG.

THERE is no country in the world that has so many legends, and legends of so remarkable a character, as Scotland. The fact is attributable to the peculiar mental form of the Saxon; always with a disposition to look back, to cull glorious memories of the past, and from these, again, to distil the spirit of a noble emulation for the present and the future. We are not now speaking of a *dilettante* antiquarianism, which becomes *blasé* over a household utensil, or learned on a relic from the cradle of art; but of that moral antiquarianism which courts examples of a grand courage, exercised for the sake of liberty or Christianity, or searches for traits of the domestic or social virtues, upon which the true greatness of a nation is founded. In this sense, every Scotsman is an antiquary—embracing his subject with enthusiasm, and inspiring his contemporaries with the patriotism he himself feels. He cannot see an old ruin, be it of a castle or a peel tower, but he must know what its possessors did in the days of the red Flodden or the desperate Drumclog—a good old grandam, but he must hear of a legend of foray, or tournay, or love:

"A story old
Of baron bold,
Or trollëd lay
Of lady gaye;"

and laugh or weep over the details, as they come from lips trembling as if with inspiration.

* Darnick Tower is still in possession of the old family, and is at present the property of our respected townsman, John Heiton, Esq., the lineal descendant of the hero of the legend.—ED.

Nor does time ever end legend, or the love of it, in the true legendary lands. Time's embalming yields the incense, which, like the sweetness of the vestal lamp, is fragrant for ever. Every recital, and every listening, is a triumph of the genius of tradition; but, as if the past were a thing of endless development, we are continually meeting with new instances, to add to the treasury of the old, and increase the stock for those who are to come after us, and live our feelings, and our throbbings, and our sighs, over again, even as did those of the dearly-beloved ones who have gone before, and now know the traditions of eternity. Though every nook and corner has been searched, there is something always left for such gleaners as we; and even now we are discoverers at the very side and within the verge of the wand of a magician. Notwithstanding that the old tower or peel of Darnick is described in the "Monastery," it was practically known to Sir Walter Scott principally as an ancient pile, which he wanted to possess, to impart some dignity of antiquity to the domains of Abbotsford. If he knew that it had been for ages the residence of the good old family of the Heitons, with the sturdy bull for their crest, the sooner their representative was engulfed in the Abbotsford swirl the better; for the new edifice was not only to be composed of old armorial stones, but to represent an *old* family just brought into being by the modern Libitina, Genius.*

* Darnick Tower, so exquisite a bit of Border antiquities, was the chief object of Sir Walter Scott's passion for acquisition, and so well known was this foible of his, that he soon obtained the name of the Duke of Darnick. Mr Heiton, though inclined to dispose of a portion of the lands, was unwilling to part with the old tower, which had been for hundreds of years in his family. We do not believe that Sir Walter himself ever viewed with any feelings of disrespect a resolution so much akin to his own family predilection; but his son-in-law, Mr Lockhart, in his Life of Sir Walter, indulged in a sneer, that the proprietor of the tower, *having made money* in Edinburgh, was unwilling

Now it was left for us to know something more of the old peel tower in addition to what history tells. The traveller by the Tweed cannot fail to observe the old peel, as it raises its grey head over the houses of the village of Darnick, a little to the west of Melrose. The real antiquary will turn from Abbotsford to examine it, and to admire its wonderful preservation, after so many years' exposure to the devastations of time and war. It is many a long day since a gallant member of the house fell, as "one of the Flowers of the Forest," in the battle of Flodden; or since another fought against the bold Buccleugh in the fight with Angus, in the very precincts of the tower; or since another Heiton, or De Heyton, as he was called, got the charter to the lands from Queen Mary and Darnley; yet, dating from the last of these periods, and we know for certain the strength then existed, we are left to admire the old representative of defence against foray, as a kind of contrast to the modern effort of the Great Unknown, so like an old-new worm-eaten charter written in vellum, worm-eaten while on the sheep's back—at least not so ancient as the skin of the goat which suckled Jove!

But to proceed with our legend of Darnick:

It happened some time about the year 1526 that Andrew Heiton was sitting in his tower of Darnick, thinking of the strange things doing in Scotland at that time, which was the Augustan Era of the Borderers. Scott of Buccleugh had risen from the condition of a riever, and would have been a right poor clan, as the ballad says, if every honest man on the Borders had had his own cow. The Homes and the Kers had also risen into great power, and the Elliots, through

to part with it. He forgot probably the counterpart, that Sir Walter, having also made money in Edinburgh, was very anxious to get it. The passage is as foolish as it is unjust, because it assumes that, while Sir Walter had a right to be proud of *founding* a family, Mr Heiton was not entitled to hold the mark of *representing* one.—Ed.

the greatness of the Scotts, stood second in the ranks of these sturdy champions of might against right. All was tumult south of the Tweed, but it was not of the old foraying kind simply, when cattle made hatred, and hatred made war, when a Cockburn was against a Tushielaw, an Elibank against a Harden, an Elliot against a Ker, only because, some twenty years before that, a heifer or a sheep had chanced to change its ownership. When the king was strong, the Borderers sometimes made a virtue of necessity, and leagued together to save their necks; but, strange enough, this brotherhood never stopped their depredations upon one another's property. These were a necessity, a kind of birthright, and being inevitable, and born with them, and ingrained to the very marrow, they were looked upon in a jolly kind of way, even by the losers, because they knew they would have better luck next time. The only difference was, that, when the king was weak, or the crown in minority, their depredations got a wider scope. The quiet proprietors then came in for their contribution, and in reward for this, the greater rievers were grateful enough to do a good act for their sovereign in their own way, but only if he kept out of their province, and did not interfere with their feuds. In truth, the Borderers never hated their king, when he did not shorten their swords, or lengthen their necks. Amidst all their fighting and stealing, there was lurking in their hearts that spirit of chivalry which, surviving in their descendants, evolved, in the changes of time, into justice and order, adorned by sagacity and good manners. So it was that, when King James V. was a minor in the clutches of Angus, and Lennox could do nothing to get him at liberty, a number of the greater chieftains were on the side of the young prince, and among these the Scotts of Buccleugh and the Elliots of Stobs; but others, such as the Homes, and Kers, and Cockburns, were creatures of the Douglas; all the Borderland was divided into king's parties

and Douglas' parties, and these again were partitioned into lesser rivalships, resulting from their personal feuds; so that it often happened that the lesser proprietors knew not what side to take, seeing their loyalty interfered with their revenge, or their revenge with their loyalty. In this way, as was said by a writer of the times, "a cow was greater than a king."

Now the Laird of Darnick was, as we have said, thinking of these things in his tower of Darnick. "My father fell at the red Flodden," he said, meditatively, "and our house has ever been a loyal one. If we joined in a foray among the green fields of Wells or Harden, or took one upon our own account, it was only what we had a right to do, by the laws of the Borders, older, I ween, than those of Edinburgh or Scone. For what other purpose has the bull upon our crest his horns, if not to show that we had a courage to maintain, and which, thank God, has never been disgraced by an inhabitant of this old peel. By my crest! I love this young James Stewart as well as I love a Scott, or hate a Douglas, and I will away to meet him on his journey from Jedburgh to Melrose."

And, calling together his retainers and all those who looked upon the old tower as a rallying point, and these having got their shaggy garrons, and as good equipments of shining rippons as they could muster, they set out upon their journey, viewing, as they went along, the rich pasturing places, to count how many sirloins they could turn out, when a good riever was hungry, and was not forgetful of himself while he was mindful of his king and his old country. They arrived in happy time to join the cavalcade, and the eyes of the Laird of Darnick were blessed with the sight of the young prince, though he was the son of the imprudent king who led the last Laird of Darnick to his death at Flodden.

"But where is Wat Scott?" he asked at many among the royal party; "where is he who should be here with his

strong arm and his sword, to show his master the kind of man he has in those parts to help him in his need against the Douglas, who holds him in a leash, and leads him about his own kingdom as if he were a dog, to show his breed and his fine collar."

But no one could answer. Some said that the sturdy but changeable Wat of Buccleugh, the most extraordinary man, next to the doughty Harden, that ever led a foray by moonlight, had joined Angus, and turned against the prince, and was to be King of the Borders, or keep the prince in his own stronghold of Buccleugh, and rule Scotland himself. And some said that he was afraid of the Douglas, and kept away; and others, that he had gone west among the Johnstones and Blackets to get "kitchen," * because, while the king was about the forest, the kine had got saucy, and would not follow a Scott.

All this confused the Laird of Darnick mightily, and he even regetted coming among the royalists, because his display might raise Wat against him some day, and he might have kept his loyalty without endangering his clanship. But he could not help himself, now that he was there, and he resolved to wait and see whether Wat would turn out to be loyal after all.

When in this dilemma, and standing amidst the cavalcade, which had stopped to recruit about midway, in a field still called the Prince's Rest, he was surprised by a whisper in his ear:

"The mistress of Darnick says ye are to stand by Jamie Stewart."

"And by my faith I will," he said, as he turned to see who had come with this news from Darnick. "Did Jessie tell you this herself, Will?"

"Ay," rejoined Will; "and what's more, she says that

* The Borderers sometimes used the word for flesh-meat; so our use of it is no novelty.—Ed.

Wat Scott is against James Stewart, and that, if the riever Buccleugh were ten times greater than he is, all the men of his clan wouldna mak her consent to desert her king."

"Just like the woman!" said Andrew. "Not the first time she has unearthed the fox, and made him rue the day he has passed the peel. Get thee back, and tell her I will obey her—not because it is a command of a wife, but the request of one who might be a queen. While horse and man may stand, or spear and blade hold together, neither bolt nor bar shall keep me from the king—neither monk nor mass shall break my purpose."

"And what's more?"

"What more, man? is not that enough?" said Heiton.

"No; there's to be a fight at Darnick; for Wat is to try to tak the king at Hallidon Hill, and you are to come hame to the tower, and be ready to offer it as a place of refuge for him, and, if necessary, to defend it; and if ye winna, she'll defend it hersel."

"Then take this other answer with you: say I will return as soon as I can with credit get away, without creating the suspicion of going over to Scott; and in the meantime get everything put into fighting order in the tower. All this I know she can do as well as I."

The messenger departed with the answer; but he had scarcely got out of sight, when Heiton encountered another man, whom he knew to be one of Scott's retainers.

"Why are you here, man," he said, "and your master collecting his clan yonder for treason against his lawful sovereign?"

"Because I am come to seek thee, as well as some others," replied he. "My master, Walter Scott, sends this to thee, wi' his gude greetings, that to-morrow night, by God's grace, he is to make a surprise on the Douglas, and seize him, and confine him in his castle, till the prince can get a better governor, or be able to reign himsel; and thou'rt

to meet him, with all the strength thou canst muster, at Hallidon."

"The foul fiend is in thee, man," said Heiton; "for thou dost not speak the truth. It is the king your master wants, and then he will rule Scotland and all of us as he listeth. Go, tell him I'll stand by the prince, though I hate Angus; but if he'll let this alone, I will still pay him his blackmail."

With this answer, which astonished the messenger, he went away, and the cavalcade moved on. There was something like a difficulty into which Heiton had got, and he began to cast up the odds. His wife, he knew, was seldom wrong in her calculations; Scott was an old wolf, who never hesitated to make honesty subserve his policy, and with him policy was only another name for self-seeking.

Even as he so thought he might get out of his perplexity, a knight with splendid armour rode past him, and whispered to him, as if afraid of being overheard, "Heiton, if you're for the prince, join Scott."

"The foul fiend is in thee, too," muttered Heiton to himself. "Thou dost prevaricate, sir knight. Thinkst thus to trick me with thy jugglery—ha! ha!"

Now Heiton was no more than other gallant Border men long in coming to a point, whether it was among black cattle or obscure fancies. His life had been spent in asserting rights which were constantly liable to invasion; and the prompt, fiery, and resolute disposition of the man had been kept for ever on the alert by the circumstances of his situation. Brave to intrepidity, almost to insensibility—strong and active in person—master of his weapons, and always ready to use them in the extremity of danger—his aid was courted in many a desperate enterprise by the rival clans on the Borders. So, putting spurs to his garron, he was galloping determinedly over the muir, when others might have been groping about for a solution in the intricate chambers of

the brain. His face was turned to Darnick, and his spurs against his horse's side. Nor was the occasion unworthy of his energy. There was mischief brewing about the very precincts of his peel, and the torrent would be poured on the very heart of his kindred. He might lose his head, or win a charter, as the issue might show; and it was impossible that, in a contest where royalty was engaged, or a Douglas endangered, he could, with his stronghold in the midst of it, be permitted to be neutral.

"And by the horns of my crest, I don't wish," he said, as he spurred on; "and if I did wish, the mistress of Darnick would teach me a better lesson than to shame myself beside the husbands of Yarrow roses or Ettrick lilies."

But a man is never so ready to be caught, as when his head is above the bush; and Heiton's somewhat grand soliloquy was no sooner finished, than he was stopped by a body of Borderers well equipped. "Bellenden!" sounded in his ears. "Buccleugh himself!" he muttered, and in an instant he stood before Wat Scott.

Now comes the storm, thought Heiton to himself, and began to collect his thoughts, as the cautious master of a vessel furls his sails, and makes his ship snug, when he discerns the approaching squall.

"Whither drive you, man, as if the mistress of Darnick waited for ye to take your dinner off the best heifer in our enemy Home's parks?" said Scott.

"Having only a small peel," rejoined Heiton, "it is necessary I should look after it when a thousand Scotts are marching north by west. It is not for crows' nests that Buccleugh marches with a thousand men, and without a blast of his horn. May I take the liberty to ask why thou'rt not with the followers of the prince?"

"Because I wish to do better for my king than follow him," said Scott.

"Make him follow *thee*," said Heiton. "Ay, so it is said;

but, Walter Scott, though I have no objection to be in your train, I would not like to see my king there."

"Nor wilt thou, man," said Scott. "Hush! what would Wat Scott do with a king? Ha! ha! kings are ill to fodder, and when thou'st fattened them, they don't make the pot boil or keep the spurs out of the pewter dish. There are kings enow besouth the Tweed when Buccleugh is there. Let Jamie keep north and Wat south, and there will be no strife in Scotland but that of the good old custom of keeping thine own. Come, I want thee and thy friends."

"I must know the foray first," replied Heiton.

"And so thou wilt. Come near," said Scott. "Listen. I know that the prince wishes to get out of the hands of Angus, and I wish to undo the grasp—understand ye."

"But an thou fail our heads may lick sawdust," replied Heiton. "Good-by."

"When wilt thou return?" cried Scott after him.

"I will tell thee when I know what's o'clock at Darnick," was the reply.

And Heiton spurred on more hastily than ever, and never lifted rein or rested heel till he was at his own tower.

"What's brought ye here, man, when the king needs thee?" said his wife, when he entered. "Thou look'st as if the king's headsman were after thee, and not thou after his enemies. Saw ye my messenger?"

"I did, Jessie," replied he; "but there's one wheel within another wheel, and one within that."

"And thou'st lost thy wits among wheels, and may even lose thy head under an axe."

"And 'tis because I fear that I am here," he said, "to tell thee thou'rt wrong, lass. Scott wants only to free the king from the hands of the Douglas. What am I to do? I am placed between the horns of a dilemma. If I go with the king, I go against him, and may see the Heading Hill at

Stirling; if I go with Scott, I go against Douglas, and may lose my head even before I get there."

"A woman's wits are like her palfrey," said the wife—"go quickest when hardest pressed. Get thee back for the men, and come here to Darnick as fast as spurs can drive thee. There's no fear of your being suspected of a want of loyalty, for Douglas does not know that Scott is at the back of Hallidon; but hark ye, keep out of Scott's path, for he has a trick of keeping live stock when they come in his way."

"And what am I to do when I come back?" said he; "for if there's a fight at Darnick, will the Laird of Darnick not be expected to be in the thickest of it?"

"Certainly; and so ye will, man. Mount and go—begone! The cloud must soon rise, or it must sink for ever!"

And Heiton, without putting more questions, returned to the Royal party, which was now approaching danger. He got the men who had gone with him, and returning by a round to avoid Scott, again reached his own peel.

There was not much time to be lost, for there were signs abroad of the coming cavalcade. People were running hither and thither, under the excitement so natural as a consequence of a Royal procession in a part of the country accustomed only to lawless raids. There was a mystery too among the more knowing, for Scott's manœuvre could not be altogether hidden. He was in the neighbourhood at no great distance from the Royal procession, and yet he did not show any intention to be of it; but his secret must have been wonderfully kept, for the generality had no suspicion that within less than an hour a bloody contest would eclipse by the confusion of its strife the *éclat* of a Royal presence. Now the mistress of Darnick evolved her plans. She sent the men away on various errands, which somehow seemed to be all very necessary, though the necessity never appeared till the moment it was made known.

"And now Andrew Heiton," she said, "thou'rt not to be found anywhere. Away in the donjon there, to remain till I tell thee thou'rt wanted either by James Stewart or Wat Scott."

This command Heiton would not obey, till he understood better her intentions, and these were conveyed by a whisper which seemed to satisfy him. He did as he was directed, and the portal of the peel tower was closed and bolted. The mistress then betook herself to the top, and planted herself where she could see far around without being observed.

Nor was all this done more quickly than was required. By and by the signs of the coming procession thickened. The indescribable stir of the air on the approach of crowds of human beings might easily be detected. Then the sounds of horses' feet, succeeded by the reverberations of trumpets, which the heralds and pursuivants began to blow as the town of Melrose came in view. The heraldic ensigns glittered in the rays of an unclouded sun; the gay armour of barons and knights cast their reflections everywhere, carrying the glory of war under the aspects of peace and loyalty. The young prince was seated on horseback, with Angus on the one side, and George Douglas on the other; their horses equipped after the gaudy fashion of the times, which were not yet beyond the era of chivalry, neighing to the sound of the horns, and curveting as if under the very feelings which inspired the riders. The scene was such as might seem the farthest removed from the inspirations of strife. Royalty sat enshrined in peace, to receive the *éclat* of admiration, and be blessed with the breathings of gratitude.

But, quick as a blast of a horn among the hills or the advent of a thunder-clap, the terrific cry of "Bellenden!" was heard, succeeded by the Border hurrah, and the next instant a thousand wild men, with glittering swords in their hands, the terrible battle-axe or the piercing spear, rushed more

like a cataract than a torrent on the all-unprepared and utterly-unsuspicious party. In the midst of them was Wat Scott, with his stern face and fierce eye. For an enemy to see it was to tremble, for a warrior to be fired. Taken at once, the Royal party swerved like a surging sea. The prince was cared for, and the Douglas, maddened by the fear of losing their royal prize, and burning with the revenge of an old hatred, flew from place to place, crying, "For the king! for the king!" It was answered by the roar of the now raised Scotts, returned again by the Royalists, and echoed with an energy redoubled by the rising fury of opposition. The pressure of the Borderers increased as their hopes rose, and their repeated hurrahs told of their success amidst the clanging of swords, the heavy fall of the axe, the sharp risp of the lance. Scott was still paramount. and everywhere, pointing, hacking, calling to secure the prince.

> "The noise of battle hurtled in the air,
> Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan."

At first and for some time the contest had more the appearance of an attack, ill resisted; but it soon ceased to present that aspect, and now it was as if every man closed with every man. The sounds of triumph or hope died away into hard breathings.

> "With foot to foot, and eye opposed,
> In dubious strife they darkly closed."

Work allowed no time or inclination for exclamations; but death everywhere among both parties extorting the groan or the yell, pulled down the proudest and the bravest; but their places were not seen after their heads fell, for the mass was so thick that there scarcely seemed room for the arm to do the work of the will. Still victory boded well for Buccleugh; and again, as the opposing party began to recede, the cries commenced, "Bellenden! Bellen-

den!" but they were not destined to be many times repeated. A loud cheer came from the king's party, even when they were retiring. It was soon explained. They were being joined by the two clans of the Homes and Kers, who had come up hot with revenge against their old enemy, but with less loyalty than possessed by Scott. The onset of the newcomers was a repetition of that of the Borderers, fierce, and bearing the aspect of victory before it was won.

All this was seen by the mistress of Darnick, and heard by Heiton with the feelings of a caged lion. It was now her time, she saw how victory pointed. It was impossible for Buccleugh to hold out.

"Now," she said, "thou knowest whom to fight for with safety. Ere a quarter-of-an-hour the king's party will prevail. Get thee into the thick of the fight, but as far from Wat Scott as you can. Thou'lt save thy head and thy lands, without injuring thy old friend.

The portal was opened, and the master of Darnick was soon fighting desperately in the ranks of the king, his nervous arm dealing death at every stroke. "Heiton to the rescue!" was sounded; and his retainers, returning, took the Scotts in flank. This movement was decisive. In a short time the Borderers were in retreat, and the wounded of the king's party conveyed to the tower, where the kind attentions and hospitality of the laird hastened their recovery.

The policy of the mistress of Darnick was soon apparent from the treatment inflicted not only upon the retainers of Scott, but on all those who did not come forward to the help of Angus;* and it was this latter consequence, foreseen by her, which dictated her stratagem. She knew that it was necessary for Heiton to be on the one side or the other; and the good effects of her wisdom were shown in another way. About thirty years after the battle of Darnick, a new charter was bestowed on Heiton; a good sign that he was

* Scott himself was outlawed.—Ed.

held in remembrance for having been found in the ranks of the king; that charter was, no doubt, not by James, who was supposed to favour the design of Scott, but by Mary, whose counsellors were not led by these distinctions, and who looked only at the open evidences of loyalty.

THE BROKEN HEART.

A TALE OF THE REBELLION.

EARLY in the November of 1745, the news reached Cambridge that Charles Stewart, at the head of his hardy and devoted Highlanders, had crossed the Borders, and taken possession of Carlisle. The inhabitants gazed upon each other with terror, for the swords of the clansmen had triumphed over all opposition; they were regarded, also, by the multitude as savages, and by the more ignorant as cannibals. But there were others who rejoiced in the success of the young adventurer, and who, dangerous as it was to confess their joy, took but small pains to conceal it. Amongst these was James Dawson, the son of a gentleman in the north of Lancashire, and then a student at St John's College. That night he invited a party of friends to sup with him, who entertained sentiments similar to his own. The cloth was withdrawn, and he rose and gave, as the toast of the evening, "*Prince Charles, and success to him!*" His guests, fired with his own enthusiasm, rose, and received the toast with cheers. The bottle went round, the young men drank deep, and other toasts of a similar nature followed. The song succeeded the toast, and James Dawson sang the following, which seemed to be the composition of the day:—

"Free o'er the Borders the tartan is streaming,
The dirk is unsheath'd, and the claymore is gleaming,
The prince and his clansmen in triumph advance,
Nor needs he the long-promised succours of France.
From the Cumberland mountains and Westmoreland lake,
Each brave man shall snatch up a sword for his sake;
And the 'Lancashire Witch' on her bosom shall wear
The snow-white cockade, by her lover placed there."

But while he yet sang, and as he completed but the first verse, two constables and three or four soldiers burst into the room, and denounced them as traitors and as their prisoners.

"Down with them!" exclaimed James Dawson, springing forward, and snatching down a sword which was suspended over the mantelpiece. The students vigorously resisted the attempt to make them prisoners, and several of them, with their entertainer, escaped.

He concealed himself for a short time, when, his horse being brought, he took the road towards Manchester, in order to join the ranks of the adventurer. It was about mid-day on the 29th when he reached the town, which is now the emporium of the manufacturing world. On proceeding down Market Street, he perceived a confused crowd, some uttering threats, and others with consternation expressed on their countenance; and, in the midst of the multitude, was Serjeant Dickson, a young woman, and a drummer-boy, beating up for recruits. The white cockade streamed from the hat of the serjeant; the populace vented their indignation against him, but no man dared to seize him, for he continued to turn round and round, with a blunderbuss in his hand, facing the crowd on all sides, and threatening to shoot the first man that approached, who was not ready to serve the Prince, and to mount the white cockade. The young woman carried a supply of the ribands in her hand, and ever and anon waved them in triumph, exclaiming, "Charlie yet!" Some dozen recruits already followed at the heels of the serjeant. James Dawson spurred his horse through the crowd.

"Give me one of your favours," said he, addressing the serjeant.

"Ay, a dozen, your honour," replied Dickson.

He received the riband, and tied it to his breast, and placed another at his horse's head. His conduct had an effect upon the multitude; numbers flocked around the ser-

jeant; his favours became exhausted; and when the Prince and the army entered the town in the evening, he brought before him a hundred and eighty men, which he had that day enlisted.

The little band so raised were formed into what was called the Manchester Regiment, of which the gallant Townly was made colonel, and James Dawson one of the captains.

Our business at present is not with the movements of Charles Edward; nor need we describe his daring march towards Derby, which struck terror throughout all England, and for a time seemed to shake the throne and the dynasty; nor dwell upon the particulars of his masterly retreat towards Scotland—suffice it to say, that on the 19th of December the Highland army again entered Carlisle.

On the following morning they evacuated it; but the Manchester Regiment, which was now composed of about three hundred men, was left as a garrison to defend the town against the entire army of proud Cumberland. They were devoted as a sacrifice, that the prince and the main army might be saved. The dauntless Townly, and the young and gallant Dawson, were not ignorant of the desperateness and the hopelessness of their situation; but they strove to impart their own heroism to the garrison, and to defend the town to the last. On the morning of the 21st, the entire army of the Duke of Cumberland arrived before Carlisle, and took possession of the fortifications that commanded it. He ordered the garrison to surrender, and they answered him by a discharge of musketry. They had withstood a siege of ten days, during which time Cumberland had erected batteries, and procured cannon from Whitehaven; before their fire the decaying and neglected walls of the city gave way, to hold out another day was impossible; and there was no resource left for the devoted band but to surrender or perish. On the 30th, a white flag was hoisted on the

ramparts. On its being perceived, the cannon ceased to play upon the town, and a messenger was sent to the Duke of Cumberland, to inquire what terms he would grant to the garrison.

"Tell them," he replied, haughtily, "I offer no terms but these—that they shall not be put to the sword, but they shall be reserved for His Majesty to deal with them as he may think proper."

There was no alternative, and these doubtful and evasive terms were accepted. The garrison were disarmed, and under a numerous guard placed in the cathedral.

James Dawson and seventeen others were conveyed to London, and cast into prison, to wait the will of His Majesty. Till now his parents were ignorant of the fate of their son, though they had heard of his being compelled to flee from the university, and feared that he had joined the standard of the Prince. Too soon their worst fears were realised, and the truth revealed to them. But there was another who trembled for him, whose heart felt keenly as a parent's—she who was to have been his wife, to whom his hand was plighted and his heart given. Fanny Lester was a young and gentle being, and she had known James Dawson from their childhood. Knowledge ripened to affection, and their hearts were twined together. On the day on which she was made acquainted with his imprisonment, she hastened to London to comfort him—to cheer his gloomy solitude—at the foot of the throne to sue for his pardon.

She arrived at the metropolis—she was conducted to the prison-house, and admitted. On entering the gloomy apartment in which he was confined, she screamed aloud, she raised her hands, and springing forward, fell upon his neck and wept.

"My own Fanny!" he exclaimed, "you here! Weep not, my sweet one—come, be comforted—there is hope—every hope—I shall not die—my own Fanny, be comforted."

"Yes!—yes, there is hope!—the king will pardon you," he exclaimed. "He will spare my James—I will implore your life at his feet!"

"Nay, nay, love—say not the king," interrupted the young enthusiast for the house of Stewart; "it will be but imprisonment till all is over—the *Elector* cannot seek my life."

He strove long and earnestly to persuade, to assure her, that his life was not in danger—that he would be saved—and what she wished she believed. The jailer entered, and informed them it was time that she should depart; and again sinking her head upon his breast, she wept "good-night."

But each day she revisited him, and they spoke of his deliverance together. At times, too, she told him with tears of the efforts she had made to obtain his pardon—of her attempts to gain admission to the presence of the king—of the repulses she met with—of her applications to the nobility connected with the court—of the insult and inhumanity she met with from some—the compassion she experienced from others—the interest that they took in his fate, and the hopes and the promises which they held out. Upon those hopes and those promises she fondly dwelt. She looked into his eyes to perceive the hope that they kindled there, and as joy beamed from them, she half forgot that his life hung upon the word of a man.

But his parents came to visit him; hers followed her, and they joined their efforts to hers, and anxiously, daily, almost hourly, they exerted their energies to obtain his pardon. His father possessed an influence in electioneering matters in Lancashire, and hers could exercise the same in an adjoining county. That influence was now urged—the members they had supported were importuned. They promised to employ their best exertions. Whatever the feelings or principles of the elder Dawson might be, he had never

avowed disaffection openly—he had never evinced a leaning to the family of Stewart—he had supported the government of the day; and the father of Fanny Lester was an upholder of the house of Hanover. The influence of all their relatives, and of all their friends, was brought into action; peers and commoners were supplicated, and they pledged their intercession. Men high in office took an interest in the fate of James Dawson, or professed to take it; promises, half official, were held out; and when his youth, the short time that he had been engaged in the rebellion, and the situation that he held in the army of the Adventurer, were considered, no one doubted but that his pardon was certain—that he would not be brought to trial. Even his parents felt assured; but the word of the king was not passed.

They began to look forward to the day of his deliverance with impatience, but still with certainty. There was but one heart that feared, and it throbbed in the bosom of poor Fanny. She would start from her sleep, crying, "Save him!—save him!" as she fancied she beheld them dragging him to execution. In order to soothe her, her parents and his, in the confidence that pardon would be extended to him, agreed that the day of his liberation should be the day of their bridal. She knew their affection, and her heart struggled with her fears to believe the "flattering tale."

James tried also to cheer her; he believed that his life would be spared; he endeavoured to smile and to be happy.

"Fear not, my own Fanny," he would say; "your apprehensions are idle. The Elector ——"

And here his father would interfere. "Speak not so, my son," said the old man, earnestly—"speak not against princes in your bedchamber, for a bird of the air can carry the tidings. Your life is in the hands of a king—of a merciful one, and it is safe—only speak not thus!—do not, as you love me—as you love our Fanny, do not."

Then would they chase away her fears, and speak of the arrangements for the bridal; and Fanny would smile pensively while James held her hand in his, and as he gazed on her finger he raised it to his lips, as though he took the measure of the ring.

But "hope deferred maketh the heart sick;" and though they still retained their confidence that he would be pardoned, yet their anxiety increased, and Fanny's heart seemed unable longer to contain its agony and suspense. More than six months had passed, but still no pardon came for James Dawson. The fury of the civil war was spent, the royal Adventurer had escaped, the vengeance of the sword was satisfied, and the law of the conquerors, and the scaffolds of the law, called for the blood of those whom the sword had saved. The soldier laid down his weapon, and the executioner took up his. On the leaders of the Manchester regiment the vengeance of the bloodthirsty law first fell. It was on the evening of the 14th of July, 1746, James Dawson sat in his prison; Fanny sat by his side, with her hand in his, and his parents were ready also, when the jailer entered, and ordered him to prepare to hold himself in readiness for his trial, in the court-house at St Margaret's, Southwark, on the following day. His father groaned—his mother exclaimed, "My son!"—but Fanny sat motionless. No tear was in her eye—no muscle in her countenance moved. Her fingers grasped his with a firmer pressure—but she evinced no other symptom of having heard the mandate that was delivered. They rose to depart, and a low deep sigh issued from her bosom; but she showed no sign of violent grief; her feelings were already exhausted—her heart could bear no more.

On the following day, eighteen victims, with the gallant Townly at their head, were brought forth for trial before a grand jury. Amongst them, and as one of the chief, was James Dawson. Fanny had insisted on being present. She

heard the word *guilty* pronounced with a yet deeper apathy than she had evinced at the announcement of his trial. She folded her hands upon her bosom, her lips moved as in prayer, but she shed not a single tear, she breathed not a single sigh. She arose, she beckoned to her attendants, and accompanied them from the court-house.

Still his friends entertained the hope that the Pardon Power might be moved—they redoubled their exertions—they increased their importunities—they were willing to make any sacrifice so that his life might be but saved—and even then, at the eleventh hour, they hoped against hope. But Fanny yielded not to the vain thought. Day after day she sat by her lover's side, and she, in her turn, became his comforter. She no longer spoke of their bridal—but she spoke of eternity; she spoke of their meeting where the ambition, the rivalry, and the power of princes should be able to cast no cloud over the happiness of the soul.

Fourteen days had passed, and during that he betrayed no sign of terror; she evinced none of a woman's weakness. She seemed to have mastered her griefs, and her soul was prepared to meet them. Yet, save only when she spoke to him, her soul appeared entranced, and her body lifeless. On the 29th of July an order was brought for the execution of the victims on the following day. James Dawson bowed his head to the officer who delivered the warrant, and calmly answered, "I am prepared!"

The cries of his mother rang through the prison-house. She tore her hair—she sank upon the floor—she entreated Heaven to spare her child. His father groaned, he held the hand of his son in his, and the tears gushed down his furrowed cheeks. Fanny alone was silent—she alone was tranquil. No throe of agony swelled her bosom, flushed in her countenance, or burned in her eye. She was calm, speechless, resigned. He pressed her to his bosom, as they took their last farewell.

"Adieu!—adieu!—my own!" he cried. "My Fanny—farewell!—an eternal farewell!"

"Nay, nay," she replied; "say not eternal—we shall meet again. 'Tis a short farewell—I feel it—I feel it. Adieu, love!—adieu! Die firmly. We shall meet soon."

Next morning the prisoners were to be dragged on sledges to Kensington Common, which was the place appointed for their execution. In the first sledge was the executioner, sitting over his pinioned victims with a drawn sword in his hand. No priest—no minister of religion attended them; and around the sledges followed thousands, some few expressing sympathy, but the majority following from curiosity, and others venting their execrations against all traitors. In the midst of the multitude was a hackney coach, following the sledges, and in it was the gentle Fanny Lester, accompanied by a relative and a female friend. They had endeavoured to persuade her from the fearful trial; but she was calm, resolute, and not to be moved, and they yielded to her wish. The coach drew up within thirty yards of the scaffold; Fanny pulled down the window, and leaning over it, she beheld the piles of faggots lighted around the scaffold—she saw the flames ascend, and the soldiers form a circle round them. She saw the victims leave the sledge; she looked upon him whom her heart loved as he mounted the place of death, and his step was firm, his countenance unmoved. She saw him join in prayer with his companions, and her eyes were fixed on him as he flung papers and his hat among the multitude. She saw the fatal signal given, and the drop fall—she heard the horrid shout, the yell that burst from the multitude, but not a muscle of her frame moved. She gazed calmly, as though it had been on a bridal ceremony. She beheld the executioner begin the barbarities which the law awards to treason—the clothes were torn from the victims; one by one they were cut down; and the finisher of the law, with the horrid knife in his hand,

proceeded to lay open their bosoms, and taking out their hearts, flung them on the faggots that blazed around the scaffold. The last spectacle of barbarity was James Dawson, and when the executioner had plunged the knife in his breast, he raised his heart in his hand, and holding it a moment before the horrorstricken and disgusted multitude, he cast it into the flames, exclaiming, as he flung it from him, "God save King George!" Fanny beheld this—her eyes became blind—she heard not the shout of the multitude—she drew back her head into the coach—it dropped upon the shoulder of her companion. "My dear! I follow thee!—I follow thee!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands together. "Sweet Jesus! receive both our souls together!" They attempted to raise her head, to support her in their arms, but she sank back lifeless. Her spirit had accompanied him it loved—she died of stifled agony and a broken heart.

THE CATERAN OF LOCHLOY.

"Were I to lose sight of my native hills, my heart would sink, and my arm would wither like fern i' the winter blast."—ROB ROY.

"AND so, my dear lads, you wish me to relate my passage with the Caterans of Lochloy?" said General Dangerfield.

"Do, father; you will so oblige me," replied the younger of his two sons.

"Well, then," continued the general, laying his hand upon the boy's head, "you shall have it; but, remember, no interruption; I must tell my story my own way."

"Agreed!" replied his eldest son, Edmund, a fine youth of sixteen.

"Well, to begin at the beginning:—I am a native of Scotland—born on the Borders—of a respectable family well known there—the Jardines of that ilk. I entered the army young, and continued there the best part of my days. I became acquainted in very peculiar circumstances with your angel mother, who, having succeeded to the family estates in Northumberland, which had belonged to your uncle and godfather, I assumed his name, that these possessions might still be inherited at least nominally by a Dangerfield.

"I was on service during that lamentable rebellion in which so much blood was poured out in an abortive attempt to restore a doomed race to their kingly possessions. I fought at Culloden; and well remember, and with horror witnessed, the cruelties that followed the victory. The Saxons, as we were called, were in consequence execrated; and the Highlanders burned with a fierce desire to avenge their slaughtered friends and kinsmen. So circumstanced, it is almost unnecessary to remark, that the government

troops were peculiarly obnoxious; and it was consequently very dangerous for them to wander to any distance from their respective stations; as, in many instances where they had been so foolhardy as disregard the strict injunctions on the subject, they never returned to tell the tale.

"I had leave of absence for a short time; and I therefore quitted my quarters, which were at Inverness, in order to spend my Christmas with my relations in Kelso—for I was not then married. As is usual, where friends are happy and comfortable, they were not fond of separating too soon, and I was loth to leave the hospitable board of my entertainers; so I lingered as long as I could, and thus made it a matter of necessity to proceed northwards with the utmost despatch. It is a long way between Kelso and Inverness; and I had to proceed on horseback, accompanied by a single servant. We got on very well till we reached Glasgow, after which the journey was both tedious and vexatious.

"On the second day after quitting the western metropolis, there came on a great fall of snow, partially obstructing the roads, which, in those days, were not in the very best state, even in good weather; and, after pursuing, apparently, the proper route for at least a couple of hours, I found that we had lost our way—no very agreeable discovery, especially towards the close of day. However, there is nothing like putting the best face on a thing when you cannot help it; so we boldly pushed on, in the vain hope of at last getting into the right path. Vain it assuredly was; for, after wandering about till it became dark, we made the important discovery that we were just as far off as ever from escaping from our difficulties.

"'Is not yon a light, sir?' exclaimed my servant. 'See! it is very high up.'

"I looked up, and certainly there was a a light; but from what it proceeded I could not conjecture. It could

hardly be from a house, as it was too much elevated. I desired my servant to follow, and we made for the mysterious place, which was with some difficulty reached; and where, to our infinite dismay, in place of finding ourselves in the vicinity of a house, we discovered that we were at the foot of a tremendous precipice, and the light that had guided us was still glimmering at an apparently inaccessible height above our heads.

"In this state of desperation, we hallooed, and made as much noise as possible, and were speedily answered by a human voice, inquiring why we made such a disturbance, and what we wanted. I answered,

"'Shelter for the night, and food; for we are nearly dead from hunger.'

"To this no reply was made for a few moments, when a voice again answered,

"'Remain where you are, and I will descend and remove you from this place of danger.'

"A man then descended from the rocks, and desired us to follow him, which we did, with some reluctance, more especially as we were compelled to leave our horses below.

"'Never mind the cattle; they will be taken good care of,' said our conductor, laying especial emphasis on the word good.'

"I must confess I did not feel by any means comfortable. But what was to be done? Starvation stared us in the face, and the danger of perishing by cold, or by falling into some of the deep ravines that lay about us, was but too probable; so I mustered up all my courage, and followed my unknown guide, who led me, by a very precipitous and dangerous path, to a large cavity in the centre of the rock. My servant came last; and, when we reached the place of our destination, we beheld a vast pile of faggots lighted up in the middle of a prodigious vacuity. The warmth, as you may readily suppose, was very grateful to

two travellers benumbed by cold; and, while we were standing by the fire, the guide suddenly disappeared, but returned, some few minutes afterwards, from some concealed part of the subterranean habitation, with above fifty armed men.

"At such a very unexpected, not to say disagreeable, spectacle, in circumstances otherwise sufficiently alarming, both myself and servant felt no small degree of fear. Our trepidation was observed; and one of the number, who seemed to have the command of the rest of the band, addressed me to the following purport:—

"'You can be at no loss to conjecture who we are, and what our ordinary occupation is; but you have nothing to fear; for, though we live by what is called violence, we are not destitute of humanity. Our depredations are never marked by cruelty, and seldom by blood; and those whom necessity has thrown on our care have never either been treated with barbarity or suffered to want. We extort only a little from those who are able to spare it, and rather augment than diminish the property of the poor. We know, alas! too well what the consequences would be were we to fall into the hands of the rich and powerful; but we are resigned to our fate. We can only die once, and our enemies can inflict no greater vengeance upon us. Miserable we may be; but we have a fellow-feeling for sufferers, and never take advantage of distress: in truth, it is from no sordid love of gain, nor is it to pander to vicious habits or immoral purposes, that we live in this manner. It is because we have no other mode of support; for, after the cruelties that have been perpetrated upon their disarmed opponents, it were in vain to expect assistance or relief at the hands of our Hanoverian oppressors.

"'You see our quarters, and shall have every accommodation they can afford you: and, if you can trust us, who have neither inclination nor reason to deceive you, we give

you a hearty welcome to these adamantine abodes, and that with the most perfect sincerity. Our fare is homely but wholesome; and our beds, though coarse, are clean. Nor be under any concern for your horses; they too shall share our protection and hospitality. We have no hay; but they shall not want. Stables we have none; but can shelter them, for one night at least, from the inclemency of the weather.'

"This address revived our courage, which was not a little augmented upon being handed a bicker of whisky—mountain dew of the most delicious description; at least I thought so then, and have never changed my opinion since. Talk of the wines of Spain, or of France, or the Rhine, I never felt from them half the delight I experienced in quaffing the nectar of the Gael. When we had finished, a supper was laid before us which might have provoked the appetite of an English alderman, and that is saying a good deal. We had blackcock and ptarmigan broiled, or, as it is called in Scotland, brandered; fine black-faced Highland mutton done to a turn in the live ashes; and a stew of snipes and wild duck, the aroma of which was perfectly ambrosial. I did ample justice to the good cheer, and ate with as much coolness and self-possession as if I had been seated in Dolly's chop-house, in place of an apparently interminable cave surrounded by caterans; for so the Highland banditti are termed.

"After having satisfied my craving appetite, in which example I had a worthy imitator in the person of my servant, rest was the next thing of which both of us stood in need. My generous host then led me to an inner apartment in the cave, which seemed at once to be the treasury and the magazine. There two sackfuls of heather were, by his orders, brought in and put on end, with the flower uppermost. Then a rope was fastened about the whole to keep it together, and on the top of each was placed a double

blanket. On this simple contrivance, which formed an exquisitely soft and delicious couch, we laid ourselves down.

"I had some bank-notes about me, and above twenty guineas in gold, besides a very handsome gold watch, and other trinkets of no inconsiderable value; but, as I had given them up for lost, I made no attempt to secrete any of them. My host, apparently divining my suspicions, insisted upon mounting guard over us—a proposal which I strenuously opposed; but he told me plainly that, unless he kept by me, he would not answer for the conduct of his companions. Against this there was no appeal; and he remained beside us, on the bare rock, all the night.

"In the morning, we found ourselves alone with this singular being. Everything remained as it had been the preceding evening, with this, to us, very pleasant exception, that the band of caterans was nowhere to be seen. Another fire of wood was speedily kindled; and, as our host told us that, before we could reach any place of refreshment, we had to go twenty miles and a bittick—which, being interpreted, means somewhere about five miles more—we took the precaution to lay in a good stock of cakes, butter, and cheese, which we washed down with a moderate quantity of the nectar of the night preceding.

"Our repast over, we descended the circuitous path which led from the cavern, and which one, uninitiated, might have searched for in vain; and, at the bottom, found a lad or gilly holding our horses, which had been well fed, and were in fine spirits. Our host then declared his intention of putting us upon the right track, otherwise, he said, we were sure of losing our way. I desired my servant to dismount and follow us on foot; but this the stranger refused to allow, assigning as a reason, that he preferred walking, and could, without the slightest difficulty, keep up with the horses. In this way, therefore, we proceeded nearly three miles; and,

it was evident that, but for his friendly assistance, the chances of getting out of our difficulties would have been very problematical. At last he stopped, and said—

"'Pursue that path for half-a-mile farther, and you will enter upon the great road, after which you can have no difficulty in journeying to the place of your destination.

"I was quite overpowered with this kindness, and felt reluctant to part with my new friend, without, at least, showing how much I appreciated his services.

"'Sir,' said I, 'I am deeply affected by the whole of your conduct towards me and my servant. I can only hope that, some day or other, I may have it in my power to serve you. I have been treated like a prince, when I expected, if not to have my throat cut—which I once thought was inevitable—at least to have been robbed of everything about me. At present I can only offer you this small remuneration, which I trust you will accept. I am only sorry that it is not more.' As I said this, I drew forth my purse, with the intention of giving him all the gold I had about me, but he stayed my hand.

"'Sir!' exclaimed the unknown, 'you have seen the way in which I and my companions live, and you may easily guess that to us gold can be no object. I thank you for the free and liberal way in which it was proffered; but I most respectfully beg to decline accepting it. In serving you I merely followed a precept which I ever—though a cateran—keep in view—to do to others as I would be done by myself. You were in distress, and I relieved you;—there was no merit in doing what I knew was merely my duty; and Ranald More will take no reward for having done that which his heart told him it was right to do.'

"'Heavens!' I cried, 'are you Ranald More?'

"'I am!'

"'Why,' I rejoined, 'your name is a terror to all the country round.'

"'I know it; but what care I? Let the bloodhounds take me if they can.'

"'Are you aware that a reward is offered for your apprehension?'

"'Perfectly.'

"'Why, then, should you trust yourself alone with two armed men?'

"To show that he was perfectly regardless of fear, he merely pointed to his claymore, and I must confess that I should not have been anxious for a single combat, and even with the assistance of my servant, I am not quite sure that we might not have come off second best.

"'But,' continued the cateran, 'you are a gentleman and a man of honour. My secret is safe with you. Bid your servant ride on a few paces.' I gave the necessary order; and when we were alone, the cateran proceeded to narrate to me the following particulars of his life:—

"'I was born in the higher ranks of society; but circumstances, which I need not recapitulate, reduced me to the humble condition of a peasant. Early misfortunes compelled me to conceal my name and family, and I enlisted as a private soldier. My conduct in the army attracted the attention of my superiors; but I had no interest to rise higher that a halbert, and was discharged with the regiment in which I served. When Prince Charles landed on his native shores, I refused to join him, as I considered myself in a manner bound, by my former services, to his opponent. I took, therefore, no further interest in this civil broil than to give my humble assistance to many of those persecuted men whom the bloody mandates of the Duke of Cumberland had marked out for destruction. In this way I have gradually collected around me a band of gallant fellows, who are ready to follow me on any enterprise, however desperate. It was not choice but necessity that compelled me to my present way of life. Some day or other I

shall, in all human probability, be taken, and made an example of, to deter others from following the like courses. I only ask, when you hear of my death—in whatever way that may happen—that you will not forget you owed your life to him who never took one but in the cause of his country, when he fought for his king, and exposed his own. Farewell.'

"Then pressing my proffered hand in his, he turned away; and in a few minutes the Highland cateran was out of sight."

"Did you never see him again, father?" inquired Edmund.

"I did; but in circumstances extremely painful; although to the last interview I had with him I owe that portion of happiness with which Providence was graciously pleased to bless me."

"Indeed! O father, do continue your story!"

"Well, Edmund, have patience, and you shall hear all. Time hurried on imperceptibly; and, in a couple of years afterwards, I found myself raised to the rank of a captain. The regiment had been ordered to Ireland, where it remained for about a year; but the Highlands of Scotland not being in a very settled state, it was ordered to that kingdom; and, in the month of January, 1748, I found myself once more in my old quarters; a circumstance far from displeasing, as I had many friends there anxious to make me comfortable.

"The severity of Government had by this time considerably relaxed; and as all fears of any new rebellion were at an end, an anxious endeavour was made to reduce the restless Highlanders to some sort of order, and put down the straggling bands of caterans that disturbed the tranquillity of the country, and kept the proprietors in a perpetual state of anxiety, by lifting, as it was called, their cattle, and other predatory acts.

"Upon inquiring after my old friend, Ranald, I was told he had not been heard of for a long time, and that it was generally supposed he had been killed in some of his marauding expeditions.

"One individual seemed to be peculiarly obnoxious to these worthies, and his cattle had not only been repeatedly carried off, but his granaries had been despoiled. He had bought some of the forfeited estates at small value, and having the misfortune—for so it was reckoned amongst the proud Highlanders, whose pedigrees were generally as long as their purses were short—to be a *parvenu*, his father having been a grocer in the Luckenbooths of Edinburgh, he experienced no mercy from the caterans, and little sympathy from the gentry in his vicinity, who laughed at his misfortunes. To crown all, he had been a commissary in the army of the Duke of Cumberland; and, though neither a bad man nor a hard landlord, still his original connection with the bloody duke was a sin not to be forgiven, and hence the reason of his peculiar persecution.

"Irritated by a series of provoking outrages, Peter Penny, Esq., of Glenbodle, appealed to our commander, and, as he volunteered to guide a small detachment to the place where he had good reason to believe his tormentors were concealed, his appeal was listened to; and, under the charge of one of our lieutenants, a party of some twenty or thirty soldiers proceeded to capture the caterans. As resistance was anticipated, they were well armed, and every precaution was adopted to prevent surprise by ambush.

"Of all this I thought nothing. Such occurrences were common; and, usually, the objects were accomplished with no very great difficulty. In this case, the result was different; and, although the detachment was successful, it was only so at a great expenditure of life; for the caterans gave battle, and were eventually subdued, after killing five of the king's troops, and severely wounding the commander.

The laird himself escaped free; for, holding the truth of the adage, that the better part of valour is discretion, he prudently kept in the rear, and thus ran no other risk than a chance shot. Poor fellow, he assured me—and I believe he spoke with perfect sincerity—that, had he imagined so much blood was to be shed on his account, he had much rather the caterans had stolen every animal on his estate, and carried off its entire produce.

"The defence had been well ordered; and it required little observation to see that the chief of the caterans was skilled in military tactics. He fought with infinite bravery, and it was not until a great proportion of his band was either killed or wounded that his capture was effected; and even this would have been doubtful, had he not been weakened by loss of blood. He was, however, brought to Inverness, with one or two of his confederates, who had also been severely wounded. The rest retreated safely to the fastnesses of the mountains.

"The day following, I was somewhat surprised by an intimation that one of the captives was desirous of seeing me. I proceeded to the prison, when I found a man lying on a heap of straw, evidently in a very exhausted state.

"'This is kind, Captain Jardine, very kind,' he exclaimed. Then, after pausing a minute, he proceeded, whilst a faint smile passed over his face—'When we last met, it was in different circumstances.'

"'Gracious Providence!' I answered, 'can it be—do I see Ranald More?'

"'You see all that remains of him—a few short hours, and I shall be beyond the reach of earthly foes. I had once hoped that better days would have come; but they came not. I sought pardon, but it was refused; driven back to my old courses, I am about to pay the penalty of my sins.'

"I endeavoured to reassure him; for, in truth, I felt a sincere esteem for him, and, personally, knew his honour-

able principles, and deeply regretted that so noble a fellow should have been thrown away. I got the best medical advice, procured a comfortable bed, and everything that might tend to alleviate his sufferings during the brief remainder of his days.

"He was gratified by my attentions. 'One thing consoles me,' he said: 'I shall not die the death of a felon. You soldiers have spared me that disgrace.'

"'Do not despond,' I rejoined; 'whilst there is life there is hope, and ——

"Here he interrupted me with—

"'No—no—no. I would not live if I could; I am weary, and need rest in my grave. Captain,' he continued, 'you have dealt with me kindly and considerately; would you make me your debtor still farther? I have one request to make, which, as it does not compromise you in the smallest degree, you will probably grant. It is to convey this ring to the only female in this world for whom I feel regard; and tell her, that the being she cherished when all others neglected him, died blessing her.'

"I assured him I would obey his commands, and that the ring should be personally delivered.

"Ranald, then, as soon as cessation from pain would allow him, disclosed his history, which was brief but painful. The son of a gentleman of an ancient family in Northumberland, proud of his descent and large possessions, he had formed an attachment to one of the bondagers on his father's estate; and, in a luckless hour, crossed the Borders, and was united to her at Lamberton—the Gretna Green of that part of the country. The result was the ordinary one—he was disinherited, and cast off by his father; and his wife, not matching with one of her own rank, could not put up with her husband's ways, or reconcile herself to those habits of propriety which were essential to her new station in society. Unhappiness followed—poverty made him fret-

ful and impatient; although well educated, he would turn his attentions to no useful purpose, and in a fit of desperation he enlisted. During his banishment from home, he saw none of his relatives excepting his niece, then a girl of fourteen, who loved her uncle, and used, by stealth, to bring to his humble dwelling such articles as she thought he might fancy; and endeavoured, so far as was in her power, to soften the severity of his situation.

"The uncle's unexpected departure did not prevent the niece showing similiar attentions to the wife; but these were soon terminated by the demise of the latter, who died with the infant in her accouchment. For several years after this, nothing was heard of Ranald; but the anger of his father continued unabated.

"Quitting the army, as I formerly mentioned, he joined the caterans; and after our interview, determined to make an effort to obtain paternal forgiveness. He left his retreat; and one evening presented himself suddenly before his father, who was residing at the family seat. He threw himself on his knees, and asked pardon.

"'Go,' said his father. 'Degenerate son, disgrace not, by your presence, the halls of your ancestors. In vain you supplicate—in vain you attempt to move me from my fixed purposes by your assumed penitence.'

"'Have you no pity for your own offspring—for a being who, but for one unhappy act, never caused you a moment's pain—who has ever venerated and obeyed you?'

"No answer was returned.

"'Say you forgive me—I seek no more; and I will leave you never to return, until my future acts have shown that I am not entirely unworthy of the proud race from whence I have sprung.'

"The old man was silent.

"'For years a father's malison has embittered my life, and rendered me reckless of all consequences. Your par-

den will restore me to myself; and can you refuse to grant it?'

"Still no response.

"'If not for one so unworthy as the miserable wretch before you, at least on her account who gave me birth. Say you forgive me.'

"'Never.'

"'Father, we meet for the last time; one word would have restored your son to happiness, and you refuse it. Farewell for ever!'

"At this moment the door opened, and a beautiful girl of twenty rushed in, and threw herself into the old man's arms.

"'Oh, sir, do not part in anger with your son; you are so good, so kind. I am sure you will restore him to your favour.'

"He gently disengaged her from his embrace.

"'Emily,' said he, 'you are a good girl; and on any other subject you might be sure I would listen to your wishes; but on this point I am immoveable; and as Reginald deliberately dissolved the tie between father and son, I no longer recognise him as my child.'

"Saying this, he left the room.

"Emily was sadly overcome by this unexpected repulse. She knew her grandfather's inflexibility, but imagined that the lapse of time would have softened his resentment. Her father—the heir apparent—was then on the Continent; and it was doubtful how far even his influence would produce any change on the unnatural anger of his incensed parent.

"'Dear uncle, you know not how deeply I grieve at this unkind reception. Often have I thought on you during your tedious absence, and longed to see you again; and now when my wish is gratified, I have no home here to offer you; but we must not part—time yet may make all right; and if you would only take up your abode near us, I would do

everything to save you; and when my father returns, we will unite our entreaties to obtain your pardon.'

"'Sweet girl!' replied Ranald, 'I duly appreciate your kindness; but it is vain to contend against fate, and here I cannot—will not stay.'

"The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a footman, who, with some confusion and hesitation, intimated that his master wished the strange gentleman would make his visit as short as possible. Having delivered this message, he withdrew.

"'Emily, farewell! I have ever loved you; and your kindness in this hour of trial shows my love was not misplaced.'

"'Do not leave me, uncle; better days will come.

"'It is vain to urge my stay; my father shall be obeyed. Once more, farewell!'

"His niece found his resolution immoveable. She entreated him to take her purse; this he refused. She then placed on his finger a ring: it was the fatal one—the cause of all his misery. The sight of it overcame him. He wept bitterly. Clasping his niece to his arms, he said, in faltering accents—

"'Beloved girl! this fatal testimonial shall part from me only with death; and, when you see it again, be assured that all my earthly cares are over.'

"He then quitted the home of his forefathers, never again to return. After wandering about for months, necessity drove him back upon his old companions. But he had lost his energy; and it was not until the attack upon the caterans that he again became the Ranald More of olden times.

"The kindness and affection of his niece made a deep impression on Ranald's mind; and his chief anxiety now was to make her acquainted with his fate, and to let her know that he died a repentant man, in the hope of forgiveness in 'another and a better world.'

"The night before he expired, I sat beside him. Ranald was composed. He said—

"'Often, very often, kind friend, have I meditated, after my last repulse, putting an end to my existence; but religion came to my aid, and I resisted manfully the temptings of the fiend. Resignation to the divine will, under every disappointment and affliction, is a duty we all owe to our great Creator, and this precept of my dear mother was too deeply implanted in my mind ever to be entirely eradicated; forgiveness of our enemies she also inculcated; and I can say, with perfect sincerity, that I die in peace with all mankind.'

"'Even your father?' I inquired.

"'Yes; even that cruel parent, through whose obduracy I am now a degraded felon, is forgiven by me. But no more of this. When you see Emily, give her my blessing. Tell her that her dying uncle had her always in his thoughts; and that, in his last moments, he prayed for her prosperity and happiness.'

"As he was evidently much exhausted, I entreated him not to fatigue himself by farther conversation. The clergyman arriving, I took my leave, and returned in the morning. He was still sensible; and the man who had sat up with him mentioned that he had been very quiet all night, though he apparently slept very little. When I approached the bedside, he recognised me; and, with extreme difficulty articulated—

"'Remember!'

"I assured him that his request should be implicitly complied with. His last words were 'Bless you!' Raising himself, he placed his wife's marriage-ring on my finger, pressed my hand feebly, and, overcome by the exertion, fell back on his pillow; a gentle slumber seemed gradually to come over him, from which he never awoke.

"As he was only known as Ranald More, the secret of

his birth and rank was carefully preserved by me; my adventure with him of former years was generally known, and my anxiety about him, and my following his body to the grave, created no manner of surprise. His companions were tried, convicted, and executed. The death of their leader, and the capital punishment inflicted on his followers, had a wholesome effect in that district, and 'lifting' of cattle, from that time, became, at least there, somewhat uncommon.

"Resolved to redeem my pledge, I procured leave of absence, and journeyed to Northumberland, where I found the family in mourning for the old gentleman, who had died, strange to say, about a week before his son. The delivery of the ring at once announced the cause of my visit, and my attentions to the unhappy donor were repaid by the extreme kindness of his relatives. Her brother, Edmund, thought he could never do too much for me; and the kind-hearted and beautiful niece of the ill-fated Ranald became ——" Here he paused.

"What, father?" inquired Edmund.

"YOUR MOTHER."

THE SERJEANT'S TALES.

JOHN SQUARE'S VOYAGE TO INDIA.

HAVING been so much edified by Serjeant Square's narrative of the Palantines, I was anxious to hear another section of his adventures. Next day, my wish was gratified.

"After my arrival in Greenock from my voyage to America," he began—"that land of promise, where I had been carried as a Palantine—I had no wages to receive; for I had wrought my passage home—that is, given my labour for my food and room in the vessel, and was not entered as one of the crew. A miserable passage it was; for the captain being as complete a tyrant as ever walked a deck, the crew were ill-used, and, of course, sulky and dissatisfied; and, humble and obedient as I was, the bad humour of every one was put forth upon me. The little seamanship I had been so eager to acquire in my voyage out, now stood me in great stead, and saved me many a kick and blow. Rough and severe as my masters were, my progress was rapid. Young and nimble as a monkey, with a quick eye and good memory, I was no despicable seaman before we reached the Cumbraes. Even the captain, after a severe squall we had off the west of Ireland, commended me, saying, 'Square, you are worth your room and victuals!' Yet of room I had little, and my victuals were no boast. Hammock or bedding I had none; but that mattered not to me, who had no rest. I was in no watch, but was called up or started with a rope's-end at the pleasure of every one, when there was anything to do, from the cable tier, or wherever I had stretched my weary limbs to snatch an hour's sleep. Still I bore up with a cheerful heart; for hard lying and scanty

fare were nothing new to me, and I hoped soon to tread the shores of my native land. Well, I had only two dollars and a-half in my pocket when I left Greenock to walk to Auld Reekie. My step was as light as my heart. Towards sunset of the second day, I reached the city; and, before I thought of rest, I had visited all my former haunts. But a very few days served to dissipate my pleasing dreams of home. I had, for years before I left Edinburgh, been looked upon as one too many in the city by those who knew me as a dependant; and doubtless, when I disappeared, they had felt relieved of a load they bore but lightly. I had returned as poor as I departed; and they looked upon me with frowns, upbraiding me with folly for my return from a place where I had a chance of succeeding.

"In my wanderings, I had entered the King's Park by the eastern stile, at the watering-stone, when, as I approached Mushet's Cairn, in the Duke's Walk, I heard the clashing of swords on the other side of the low wall. Urged by curiosity, I mounted the heap of stones to obtain a sight of the combatants. My eyes became fixed upon them; my whole mind was filled with so ardent, so intense an interest, that I could scarcely breathe; yet my feelings were so painful at first, that my heart beat thick, and my limbs shook under me. At one instant, I felt a desire to part them—the next, to see the scene enacted and ended. I had in my mind already taken a side, and wished 'my man' to conquer. They were both, to appearance, gentlemen, and about the same age and stature; one of them much slighter made than the other, who pressed him hard, while he appeared to act principally on the defensive; and so cool and dexterous was he in the use of his sword, that his opponent, though equally master of his, was foiled in all his assaults. It was fearfully grand to see two men so intent upon the destruction of each other. Their looks spoke hatred and

determination; their keen eyes were fixed upon each other with an intensity I never before thought the eye capable of; each seemed fixed immoveably upon that of his adversary; yet a fierce vitality beamed in them, motionless as they appeared; while every limb and muscle of their bodies was in the most violent action. No sound arose on the stillness of the scene, except the clash and harsh grating of their swords, as they foiled each other in their cuts and thrusts. While I stood fascinated, gazing upon them, the thinner person—whose side I had taken involuntarily, for I knew neither the individuals nor the cause of quarrel—in parrying a thrust, slipped his foot, and sank to the ground, his antagonist's sword passing through his body in a downward direction. He lay extended at his conqueror's feet, who, quick as thought, seized the hand of his fallen adversary, and detached a ring from one of his fingers. I stood immoveable on the heap of stones, with the low wall still between us, watching the issue. He disengaged his sword, and was in the act of plunging it again into the body. 'Villain! villain!' I shouted; it was all I could utter, horrified as I was. He stopped his raised hand, looked round to where I stood, exclaimed, in a voice hoarse from passion, 'Scoundrel, you must die!' and, at the same moment, bounded towards me, with the blood-stained sword in his hand. Not a moment was to be lost. Urged by fear, I sprang from the cairn, and fled towards the hill, across the swamp. Fearfully I looked over my shoulder as I neared the wall; he was evidently gaining upon me. Young and fleet as I was, he was far my superior in length of leg and strength; yet my fears did not destroy my presence of mind. I saw that it was only by doubling I could escape; for, if the chase were continued for any length of time, he must run me down like a hare; and the fearful consequence gave me energy. At a bound I cleared the wall, and, stooping, ran under its shade for some distance before he reached

the spot I had leaped. He stood (for I heard his panting breath) for a second, before he perceived the direction in which I had run—a circumstance of the utmost service to me. Down he leaped, and followed on my track. I again sprang the wall; and, after running a few yards, I was on the highway, and clear of the park. My hopes now were all placed in meeting some one or other, to claim their protection, or in reaching a house before my pursuer could overtake me. I had not run a hundred yards towards the Abbey Hill, when I saw three men in sailor's dress before me, going towards the city. I called to them to stop, for the rapid step of my enemy was sounding in my ears like the death-knell. They stood still, and looked back; the next moment I was up to them; while he that followed leaped the wall, and disappeared in the direction of the town. We sought not to pursue him, for I had not yet recovered my breath sufficiently to inform them of what I had been an unconscious witness. As soon as I told my story, the men resolved to go with me, to ascertain whether the person was dead or required our aid, saying, they were on their way to the Canongate, to meet their captain, by appointment, and having yet sufficient time, they would go by the King's Park, and bear the unfortunate gentleman to town. When we arrived at the spot, we found him seated upon the grass, his head bent forward upon his knee, sick and faint, the blood welling from the wound in his side, which he was making no effort to staunch, and he was plunged in the deepest melancholy. I could hear him sigh heavily ere we crossed the wall. When the seamen saw him, they uttered a cry of mingled surprise and rage. He raised his head; his face was deadly pale; a faint expression of pleasure passed over it for a moment, then it settled into deep sorrow. He appeared utterly regardless of life; and it was even with gentle violence only that he allowed them to staunch his wound by binding their silk handkerchiefs

round his breast. We found that his ankle was also dreadfully sprained and swelled; and, truly, his agony must have been great from this cause alone; but no complaint or groan escaped from him; and I thought I perceived that his sufferings were far more mental than even bodily. From exhaustion or apathy, he allowed us to do as we pleased; all he commanded being, to be taken to his vessel, and not to the town. So we bore him to a house at Clock Mill, the nearest refuge, while I ran to the Canongate to procure a surgeon, and a conveyance to carry him to Fisherrow. The surgeon I might bring at my own responsibility, for he would not hear of one, wishing evidently to die. The sailors, who recognised me as having been on board the Eliza of London only a few hours before, in quest of a berth, looked upon me now as one of the crew, for the service I had rendered their beloved captain.

After an absence of nearly an hour, I with difficulty procured a post-chaise and a surgeon. The injury was found not to be of much importance, the sword having glanced along the ribs, producing only a severe flesh wound, which was dressed, and the dislocation reduced. The surgeon insisted upon his staying where he was, for fear of fever, but he was bent upon proceeding to his vessel; so, accompanied by the surgeon, he set off in the chaise, and I, joining my new comrades on foot, proceeded to the vessel along with them. The sensation produced by the wounded state in which the invalid had come on board, was in proportion to the love the men bore to their captain. As soon as we were upon the deck, every one on board crowded around us. I gave a true detail of all I had witnessed; every one shook me heartily by the hand, and declared he would be my friend to the end of life; but no one was more warmed to me for the little I had done than the mate. The captain's wound put on a favourable appearance, and he was declared out of danger. In a few days, the wind chopped about to

the westward, and we got under weigh, to complete the voyage, being bound for London. Before we weighed anchor, the captain caused himself to be carried upon deck, where he sat gazing in the direction of Edinburgh until we were out of the Frith; he seemed consumed with some secret grief, and had not opened his mouth to give a single order, the mate doing all that was required.

"When we had passed the islands of May and the Bass, and stood into the ocean, he called me to him.

"'Square,' said he, 'I have been informed by the mate how much I am indebted to you. The service to me was of small value, insomuch as I had rather have perished in the combat, than survived to think that my traitorous rival has triumphed in his villany; but, believe me, young man, my gratitude to you is not the less—you shall in me never want a friend.'

"I thanked him kindly for his assurance, and said it would be my endeavour to deserve his friendship. He was soon after removed below, and I did not see him until we reached the Thames, and were moored at the Isle of Dogs. The captain, who was part owner, went into furnished lodgings while we were delivering our cargo, being still unable to walk, from the dislocation of his ankle. The greater part of the crew also lodged on shore; but I remained on board with the mate, in charge of the vessel, and often went to the captain with letters and messages. In one of my visits, he desired me to be seated, and give him an account of myself, as he said he had taken an interest in my welfare, and wished to serve me, agreeably to his promise, if I continued to deserve it. I gave him a full detail of my life until I came to the encounter I had witnessed between him and his opponent, when I stopped. 'Nay, young man,' said he, 'I wish to hear an account of what you were witness of, from your own mouth.' I went on. He heard me with composure, until I mentioned the tearing off the ring from his finger. When

I came to this part of the narrative, his countenance became distorted with rage; he ground his teeth, and stamped upon the floor; his eyes flashed fire, and his passion seemed too great for utterance. I looked on in silence, fearful that, from his weakness, he would fall into a fit. At length, he said, as if in deep abstraction, and unconscious of my presence—

"'Faithless Eliza! I thought I had cast it at thy feet in my agony of blighted hopes, and felt pleased. It was my intention; but my mind was a chaos of misery. The traitor Wallace has got the pledge of the love you proved false to. Would that his sword had pierced the heart his treachery has rendered miserable! No; I shall meet him once again, and one of us shall die ——'

"Then starting to his feet, he supported himself upon the back of a chair, his countenance no longer distorted with rage, having changed into a settled, resolute cast, calm and stern. His burst of emotion had passed away.

"'Square,' he said, 'you, like myself, have no tie to bind you to Scotland, no relation or friend on earth; we are as if we had dropped from some distant planet, now desolate of inhabitants, into this busy world. Still I must ever remember that any happiness I ever enjoyed was in Edinburgh; and my heart's cherished hopes—hopes that have cheered my way through toil and danger—were therefore ever crushed by the subtle arts of one I thought my friend. Base wretch! you shall not long exult in your villany! Square, you must accompany me back to Edinburgh, as soon as I am able to use this limb with vigour. Do you agree to accompany me?'

"'With pleasure,' I replied; 'whenever or wherever you go, I go'. My young heart was full of gratitude for the kindness I had received from him; and I felt almost as keenly for his wrongs as if I had been a brother. He saw the workings of my mind in my countenance, and, seizing my hand, said—

"'Hence forth we shall be as friends.'

"The surgeon entered at this period of our discourse, and, to the captain's anxious inquiries, replied that it would yet be some weeks before his limb would be so strong that he might use it without pain, for any length of time. It was a whole month after this before we left London, during which I had a private tutor to teach me, and restore any little instruction I had got at school during the life of my parents. I went no longer on board, save to visit the mate, who was now as master on the point of sailing; the Eliza being chartered, and her cargo almost on board. He sailed for Rotterdam eight days before we intended to leave London for Edinburgh; which we were to do in a chaise. A voyage to America, in the present day, gives a landsman less concern than a voyage between London and Leith did in those days.

"All being arranged, and the captain's ankle pretty stout, we set off for Edinburgh. In our tedious ride over the wretched roads, he was pleased to give me the following account of himself:—He was the second son of a gentleman of decayed fortune in the north of Scotland. He and his elder brother had been sent, young, to an uncle's in Edinburgh, for their education. His brother had chosen his uncle's profession of the law; while he, much against his uncle's wish, had preferred the sea. In his occasional visits to Edinburgh, when opportunity offered, he had met in his uncle's a lovely young lady, the daughter of a gentleman, who was obliged to live in exile for the share he had had in the rebellion. She was under his uncle's protection, as her father's agent and her guardian. The young sailor's heart was won by the charms of the gentle Eliza; he wooed and won her love. Vows of constancy were exchanged on both sides; but, although fortune had smiled upon him, he was still not rich enough to maintain his beloved in the rank she was by birth entitled to: and it was agreed at

their last parting, that, after a few more successful voyages, he should ask her hand in form from his uncle. Changed rings were accordingly the memorials of their plighted faiths. It was Eliza's ring that Wallace had torn from his finger on that eventful evening. Urged by love, he had in his last voyage come far out of his regular course to visit his Eliza; and having anchored in Fisherrow Bay, he flew on the wings of joyous expectation to Edinburgh. On his way he had met an old schoolfellow, who, in answer to his inquiries after his friends, told him, as a part of the news of the day, that his old schoolfellow and rival, Wallace, was on the eve of marriage to Eliza, and that his addresses were sanctioned by his uncle. Maddened by the intelligence, he had hurried to his uncle's, and had the bad fortune to see Wallace taking leave of her as he approached the house; whereupon, in an agony of jealousy and disappointed love, he hastened to overtake him. Angry words ensued—Wallace boasted of his triumph, and a challenge was given and received, to meet in the King's Park. Urged on by his disappointed hopes, he waited upon Eliza in a frame of mind bordering upon distraction. Without prelude or explanation, he upbraided her as the most faithless of women, saying, he now thought as lightly of her love as he had ever highly prized it; and, in his fury, thought he had, as he intended, thrown her ring at her feet. At first she had looked alarmed, and wept, surprise held her silent, until all her native pride, and the innate dignity of the female, were roused by his taunts and reproaches, and she ordered him from her presence. They parted in mutual anger. Without seeing his uncle or any acquaintance in town, he had walked in the most sequestered parts of Arthur's Seat and the Hunting Bog, until the hour of meeting his rival. They met, and the issue has been told.

"As we approached the city, he became very dull and uncommunicative, sitting absorbed in his own thoughts for

hours; the fierce aspect that his countenance had for a long time worn was succeeded by a deep shade of sadness. I was young and inexperienced, and knew not how to speak, to divert his mind from the painful feelings that were preying upon him; thus we sat silent for hours, until we reached Musselburgh. 'Square!' he said, starting up, 'I shall soon have my doubts solved. For this some time an idea has haunted my mind, which renders me the most miserable of men. What if, in my madness (I can give it no milder term), I have wronged Eliza! She was all goodness and truth, and I ought to have weighed well before I reproached her. I have striven to think hardly of her, but my heart refuses. Eliza! Eliza! I have lost you for ever; true or false, I can never look on thy face again; but Wallace shall not triumph in my misery. I have preferred bringing you with me to any other person, because of your intimacy with Edinburgh. I do not wish it to be known that I am in town, until I have ascertained, through you, what has occurred since my last unfortunate visit to it.' I promised cheerfully to do my utmost to serve him in any duty he required, and, before the evening set in, we were safely lodged in the White Horse Tavern at the head of the Canongate. Our first step was to send for one of the cadies—a race of men now extinct; but they were, in their day and generation, a numerous fraternity in Edinburgh, and the source of communication, before the invention of the penny post. The affairs of the inhabitants of all ranks were in general well known to them. Their trustworthiness was admitted, and they were often employed in preference to domestic servants, in whose gossiping qualities they did not participate. I named Angus M'Dougal in preference to any other, as I had long known him. I brought him. When he entered, the captain sat with his back towards us, wrapped up in his travelling cloak, and avoiding the exposure of his face. After our first greeting, I proceeded to make the ne-

cessary inquiries, and found that Mr H—— was in town, and went very little abroad, on account of some distress in his house. The captain gave a start, a stifled groan escaped him, and, to relieve his suspense, I inquired of Angus if he knew the cause. 'Oh, the cause is no secret,' replied he; 'his ward, Elizabeth, is not expected to recover frae a dangerous illness. They say it is the effect o' grief, from a strange and hurried occurrence that happened several weeks ago. Miss Eliza had a sweetheart o' the name o' Mr Wallace, wha it was supposed was to hae married her; he was a constant visitor at her uncle's; but there was ane, they say, she liked better, a nephew o' Mr H——'s, wha was lang awa at sea. He appeared suddenly in the house when her guardian was frae hame, and as suddenly left it; nor has he been heard o' since. He was seen in the King's Park by several, as they think. It's no for me to speak evil o' ony gentleman; but they say that her other sweetheart murdered him, and concealed his body; for next forenoon, Mr H—— was sent for express, to come hame to Miss Elizabeth, wha had been out o' ae fit into anither ever since she had seen his nephew. Mr H—— sent everywhere to inquire for the unfortunate young man, but nae tidings could be had. Mr Wallace had left the town suddenly, but nane could tell whar he had gane. They say he was also seen, latish in the afternoon, entering the Duke's Walk to the east. Every part was searched, in vain, for the body, which has never been discovered; but, what has put it beyond a doubt, in the minds of many, that the youth was killed, was, that at a sma' distance within the wall near Mushet's Cairn, the grass was observed to be trodden down, and stained wi' blood. This, and the flight o' Wallace, who is said to hae gane owre to Holland to avoid the vengeance o' his uncle, are, at best, very suspicious circumstances. This Johnny Square, is a' that I ken o' the matter.'

"Dismissing the cadie as soon as possible, amply pleased

with his reward, I hurried to the captain, who was weeping, like an infant, his face buried in his handkerchief. I saw that anything I could say, in the present situation, would be intrusion upon grief, too sacred for interference, and too recent to be soothed. After a few minutes, he turned to me—'Am I not the most guilty of men,' he said, 'and deservedly the most wretched? I have, by my hasty, jealous temper, killed my Eliza, and banished myself from her presence for ever, even should she recover. Oh! how could I, for a moment, harbour such a thought, to the injury of such an angel—far less give utterance to it! Fool, fool, that I have ever been!—it is fitting you die to atone for your jealous madness.' And he beat his forehead with his clenched fists. I became afraid that he intended to do some injury to his person; for there was a fierceness, mingled with agony of mind, in his looks, as he grasped, as if by some involuntary motion, the hilt of his sword, that alarmed me. I was on the point, different times, of rushing upon and disarming him; but, at length, this paroxysm was succeeded by one of subdued grief, and he became, to all appearance, as feeble as an infant. 'Oh, that I could, by any sacrifice,' he cried, in thrilling tones, 'obtain one glance of my injured Eliza, if it even were my last, to die at her feet, pleading for forgiveness!—her esteem, and with it her love, I know I have forfeited for ever! Rash, rash fool that I was!' Again he relapsed into silence, and, taking advantage of this new turn of thought, I suggested his writing to his uncle. 'Alas, Square,' he said, 'I cannot write; my mind is in a chaos of confusion—my brain is racked almost to madness.'

"'Then,' I answered, 'allow me to go, as if I had just arrived in town, and expected to have found you there, and to act as occasion requires. If I find I can, there shall be a messenger sent for you to come to your uncle's, or, at all events, I shall return in as short a time as possible, and give you an account of my success.'

"'Square, my friend,' he replied, grasping my hand, 'do with me as you please. My heart is broken—my mind is a tumult of agonising reflections of what I am, and what I might have been. I blush for the weakness you have witnessed in me; but what man in his folly ever threw from him such a treasure as I have lost, and lost for ever?'

"Anxious to alleviate the misery of my benefactor, with hasty steps I proceeded to the Covenant Close, to call upon Mr H——, who lived in the third flat in the Scale Stairs. Almost breathless from the speed I had used, I 'tirled at the pin.' The door was opened by a genteel man-servant in livery, of whom I inquired if Mr H—— was at home, and was answered in the affirmative. I was ushered into an elegant room, where, after waiting a few minutes, a benign but melancholy-looking old gentleman entered:—

"'Mr Square, I am informed,' said he, 'you wish to see me: may I inquire, is your business very pressing, as I am rather engaged at present?'

"'I humbly beg pardon,' said I; 'I am a stranger to you, and only came to town this afternoon. My acquaintance is with your nephew, Captain H——, of the Eliza: can you inform me when you expect him in town?'

"The old man sank into a chair, and remained silent, overcome by his feelings; at length, looking inquiringly into my face, 'Alas! sir,' cried he, 'I have now no nephew.'

"'Excuse me, sir,' I said, 'if I have wounded your feelings. I am astonished at what you tell me, for I saw him, in good health, not many days since, and expected him to have been here to-night.'

"Starting to his feet, he came to where I sat, and, placing his hand on my shoulder, looked anxiously in my face—'Young man,' he said, solemnly, 'have you seen Hugh H—— within these five weeks?'

"'Certainly,' I replied; 'I saw him in London within these ten days, in good health.'

"Clasping his hands, and raising his eyes to heaven—'Blessed be God!' he said, 'my nephew is alive, and my Eliza may yet be snatched from the grave!'

"We now entered into familiar conversation, in which I got from him a similar account to what the cadie had given us, with the addition only of the exertions Mr. H—— had made for the bringing of Wallace to punishment for the murder of his nephew. 'That man,' he concluded, 'has come to rejoice that he is in life; for so strong was the circumstantial evidence, that, had he been apprehended and brought to trial, there is not a jury who would not have given their verdict Guilty.'

"In return, I gave him a detailed account of all that I had witnessed, and the state of misery in which I had left him. Mr. H—— heard me with varied feelings as I proceeded, and said he had had no idea of the attachment between Hugh and Eliza, until this unfortunate affair disclosed it to him; and he feared it had proved fatal to his ward, who was in a very dangerous state—her life even despaired of; but he trusted his nephew's return would be more efficacious than all the prescriptions of her physicians; for hers was a sickness of the heart.

"With a thrill of pleasure at the success of my call, I bade him adieu, taking with me the assurance that he would break the joyful intelligence to Eliza, and either call at the White Horse Tavern himself, or send a note by his servant, to his 'poor Hughie, who was ever a passionate boy,' to come to him. When I returned, I found him pacing the room with hasty steps.

"'Square,' he cried, in a voice bordering on anger, 'is this what I expected from you? You have stayed an age away.'

"'I beg pardon, captain, but I have made no unnecessary delay. I bring you tidings of good hope. Your uncle is rejoiced you are safe, and in town; he will either call himself,

or send a card for you to-morrow, as he shall judge safest for the sake of Eliza. Meanwhile, he is to break the unexpected news to her.'

"Joy and grief, hope and fear, now by turns took possession of his mind, until we retired to rest.

"Next forenoon we passed in a state of great anxiety. Captain H—— had spent a sleepless night, and still paced the room in violent emotion, or sank exhausted into his seat. I could not leave him, for the sake of humanity. At length, about two o'clock, Mr H—— came himself to visit his nephew. I cannot describe this meeting; it was painful to all parties. The old man had endeavoured to break the news of Hugh's safety to his ward without success; she was, he confessed, so much reduced, that he feared the agitation might prove fatal; for every allusion to him, since that melancholy occurrence, had produced a series of fainting fits; soon, however, he hoped, with safety, to be enabled to communicate the safety of her Hugh, whom, in her troubled slumbers, he had heard her name, while the large drops glistened on or glided from her long dark eyelashes.

"'O Hugh, Hugh, what have you done?' said the old man, unconsciously, as he wrung his hands—the tears falling over his venerable face.

"'Uncle, dear uncle, do not drive me to distraction,' cried the captain; 'I cannot endure the ——'

"'Pardon me, my boy,' interrupted the uncle; 'I am a silly old bachelor; I know not what I say. Dear Hugh, I didn't mean to grieve you; but who can look on yon suffering innocent creature, and speak but as the feelings dictate?'

"The captain groaned aloud, and hid his face in his handkerchief.

"Several days were passed in a similar manner before we removed to the Covenant Close; but, alas! Captain H—— had arrived too late. The shock had untwisted the thread of life in the gentle Eliza, and it seemed only to hold to

gether until his arrival. Joy, no doubt, once more visited that broken heart, when she smiled forgiveness upon her heart-stricken lover; but she survived only for three weeks after his arrival, and breathed her last sigh as he bent, almost bereft of reason, over her wasted form.

"During this period, I was quite unoccupied, and walked the streets of Edinburgh with a stately gait. How different were my feelings now from what they once had been on the same spot, in former days, when I had run or glided through them, timorous and abject! A child might have taken the wall of me then; now I had a splendid dress, and guineas in my pocket. I walked erect and resolute as a giant, and would give the wall to none; such is the effect of circumstances upon the mind. This, I believe, is the only time in my life I ever was so foolish. I feared to meet any one who could by any chance have recognised me. Yet in my pride I was still a solitary being, too bashful to make new acquaintances with those I thought my equals, and too proud to associate with those I had known before. Thus did I strut about like a solitary peacock in a farmyard, with this difference, that I became, unlike the haughty bird, weary of my own consequence.

"After the funeral of Eliza, Mr H—— pleaded upon the captain to remain in Edinburgh; but he replied that he could not; all the scenes around only added to his melancholy, by recalling to his mind the lovely object he had lost for ever, and brought up the consciousness of the means—his own cruelty and jealous temper. In a few days we were once more on our way to London, where we arrived in safety, and found the Eliza moored at Rotherhithe. The captain resumed his active duties; and his grief was either more bearable, or, to blunt its edge, he entered more keenly into commerce. I was now appointed second mate. His wish was to obtain a distant freight, unmindful to what part of the world, so that the period of his absence

from Britain might be the greatest. Not finding one so readily as he wished, he took a rich cargo on board upon his own account, fitted for the Indian market, and we left the Thames in November, 1751.

"For several years from this date, I was as happy as any human being could be, for we sailed the Indian Ocean from point to point, in all directions, encountering various turns of fortune, but still progressing towards wealth. I was myself rich, far beyond what I could ever have hoped to have been; and as for Captain H——, he had accumulated a fortune with which he was satisfied; his equanimity of mind was in some measure restored; he could talk at times of Eliza with a pleasing melancholy, and spoke of returning once more to Europe. As his vessel, the Eliza, was now old, and not safe for a home voyage, he resolved to sell her in the country, and return to Europe a passenger in the first commodious trader. This he actually did at Bombay, giving to each of his crew who had left England with him a handsome present, and the amount in cash of their passage-money home, that they might either return at his expense, or stay longer in the country, where there were great inducements, if they chose. Me, as my sincere friend, he strongly advised to remain for a few years longer, when I might return an independent man to Edinburgh.

"This was one of the golden opportunities every man has once in his power during his existence of bettering his circumstances for life. My evil destiny, or some other cause, made me reject it. I had, for several months back, as I had had several times before, a strong longing to visit Scotland once more. It is hardly possible for those who have never been for years absent from their native home, to imagine how overpowering this home-sickness is, and how little will furnish to a languishing mind a plausible excuse for a return. I felt a conviction that I was not acting in the best manner for my own interest; yet I soothed down this

feeling by the hope that I could return at any time, and pursue my fortune. To Captain H—— I stated my wish to return to Europe at all events, as I was weary of the Indian clime, and that, as I had left Edinburgh with him, I would, if he had no objections, return in the same vessel. He agreed; and thus we were again fated to go together.

"After remaining on shore inactive for some weeks, we embarked on board the Traussean, bound for Amsterdam. Would that I had been of the same turn of mind and resolution as Mr. Yates, our chief mate, who remained in the country, and soon sailed a vessel of his own! I saw him several years afterwards in London, living in wealth and independence, the produce of his toils in India. I gratified my wish at all hazards—he obeyed his better judgment; he had his reward—I had mine.

"From Bombay to the Cape of Good Hope we had a quick and pleasant run. We stopped at the Cape for three weeks, and took in refreshments and some passengers, amongst whom was an old, rich planter, on his return to Holland, taking with him a black boy, his slave, one of the merriest and most obliging creatures I ever saw. The little fellow soon became the favourite of every one on board. Pontoben was the joy of every one except his master, who was ever correcting or finding fault with him. In one of my sallies, I called the old planter Satan. He was worthy of the title, and it adhered to him like a burdockhead. A more forbidding figure I have never seen. Tall and bony, he had the appearance of a gigantic skeleton covered with shrivelled brown leather; his forehead, large and deeply-furrowed, rose over two shaggy eyebrows, that overshadowed eyes of light blue, keen and restless. There was a peculiar expression in his whole face that made even the most daring feel uneasy on beholding him; and, unless they were excited at the time by hatred towards him, few ever dared his eye. I myself felt that no inducement could ever

make me look upon him as a kindred being; and, indeed, he rarely spoke to any of his countrymen. His harsh, sepulchral tones were seldom heard but in execrations of poor Pontoben, who would leave his master with the big drops of anguish, from punishment, rolling down his ebony face; and, in a few minutes after, be seen laughing and sporting with the seamen.

"On the evening of the seventh day after we had left Table Bay, the sun set like an immense globe of deep red fire, and the sky began to be overcast. The vessel was made all tight for the expected storm; and come, it did, soon after dark, with fearful force. All I had ever encountered could not be compared to its violence. The vessel pitched, groaned, and quivered, during the whole night, as if she would have gone to pieces; and, when day at length came, with no abatement of the storm, it only served to show us the extent of our danger. The sky was dark and lowering; heavy masses of clouds obscured the sun, and poured forth deluges of rain; the vessel laboured so much, and the wind was so strong, that no man on board could keep his feet, and the crew were lashed to different parts of the vessel, to prevent their being washed from the decks by the waves, which were every now and then making a complete breach over us. The captain and I shared the fatigues of the crew as we shared their danger. Another night of darkness and tempest, if possible more severe than the first, passed over our heads; still the vessel held good, and we hoped to weather the gale; when, just about an hour after daybreak, the wind chopped about nearly two points off the compass; the man at the helm, either through fatigue or mismanagement, allowed a tremendous sea to strike her too much forward, when she heeled so far over that a second wave laid her upon her beam ends. A cry of despair rose, in one long, wailing sound, from every one on board; three of the crew were hurled into the mountainous ocean, and perished in a

moment. The vessel had been making a considerable quantity of water, but not sufficient to cause alarm on that account; but now it was finding its way in by the companions from every wave that rolled over us. It is in moments such as these that the character of the seaman shines forth in all its lustre. For a few minutes, and no more, we were paralysed, and looked on in stupor, expecting to go down to the deep; still she floated—the larboard side only a few inches out of the water; the wind had perceptibly declined, still the sea ran as high as ever; and thus, for several hours, we clung to fastenings, in expectation of her going down every instant. We had it not in our power to do anything for our safety; it seemed as if her cargo had shifted in the hold, and the first heavy sea would finish all. I cannot say how long this lasted; the rage of the tempest at length died away, and it became possible for us to act. Her fore and mizzen masts were cut away, when she righted considerably; and then we commenced to throw what of her cargo we could get at overboard, altering the remainder until she righted. When hope once more dawned upon us, exhausted by hunger and fatigue, we stretched our weary limbs upon the deck, and sank to rest—the captain of the vessel taking the helm, and keeping watch with a few of his exhausted crew, who were soon relieved by short watches, until their strength was restored.

"Jurymasts were now erected, and we hoped to reach the coast of Portugal and refit; but our misfortunes had only commenced, for we found that our bread had been completely destroyed by the water we had made during the storm; and, besides, we were not provisioned for a very protracted voyage. It was at once agreed that both passengers and crew should go on short allowance; and, as our vessel was both leaky and sailed badly under her jurymasts, our prospects were now gloomy enough. Satan had never left his berth since the coming on of the storm; but lay and

blasphemed, and beat poor Pontoben as usual, his temper having evidently become worse under his privations, though he had many preserves and luxuries of his own private property. The captain and myself kept up our spirits, in the expectation of falling in with some vessel bound for Europe, in which case we would leave the Traussean; but we were not so fortunate; for scarce were we refitted from the wrecks of the hurricane, when we were becalmed for three weeks. I shall not attempt to describe this our melancholy situation on the bosom of the ocean, that lay all around as still as death; its glassy brightness dazzling the eye under the intense rays of the sun, and our scanty supply of provisions rapidly wearing done. A lingering death from famine seemed inevitable; despair began to steal upon us; anxiety and fear were visible in the countenances of all. The pious became more fervent in their devotions, and the profane more choice in their expressions. All of us moved about the vessel like spectres, seldom exchanging words, every one seemingly absorbed in his own reflections. Vain was the attempt to call up a cheerful thought. If a laugh was heard, which some would attempt, it looked more like madness than mirth, and grated upon the ear like some unearthly sound; while tales of fearful import and sad forebodings alone could gain the attention of the listeners.

"This state of the ocean at length changed; a faint breeze sprang up; but, alas! it was unsteady and baffling, and our crippled vessel was ill adapted for any but a leading wind. By observation, we were nearly equidistant from the coast of Portugal and the Cape; otherwise, to save our lives, we would have run the wreck of the Traussean back to Table Bay. This plan was even urged by several of the crew; but overruled by the captain and majority; for the reason that we could not depend upon the wind lasting long enough to carry us there, and we had more chance to fall in with some vessel as we neared Europe.

Scarcely able to stand to the pumps, for she needed clearing every twelve hours, we persevered in our course, the provisions being doled out in the smallest portions that could sustain nature, and diminished till we resembled skeletons more than men. When we commenced the voyage, there were a great many monkeys, parrots, and other birds, intended as gifts to friends in Europe. These had long since been consumed by their owners; even the vermin we were so fortunate as to catch were indeed a luxury; and every invention was put in practice to ensnare them. The preserves and private stock, everything that could sustain life, had been taken from Satan and the other passengers, and placed in the common stock; so that no one might fare better than his fellow. We had for some time looked at each other with an evil eye, and to wish for a death, that we might avoid the necessity of casting lots; for, strange to say, we clung to life the more tenaciously the more our sufferings increased. I have often since been amazed to think that, for trivial sufferings or wounded pride, men will voluntarily commit suicide; and yet, among twenty-five individuals, to any of whom a natural death would have been a kind relief, this fearful remedy was never thought of. With the keenest scrutiny we counted the ships crew and passengers every morning, in hopes that some one had died in the night. One morning, Pontoben, who had, even amidst the ill-usage he received from his master, stood it out better than any on board, was amissing, and a search was made for him through the ship in vain. At length he was found in his master's berth, beyond him, dead—the marks of strangulation upon his throat, evidence to us all that Satan had strangled him through the night. The body was at once demanded; but his master, with execrations, refused to deliver it up, as he maintained the boy was his own property, and he would 'keep it for his own use.' My blood ran cold as I looked

upon the murdered boy and his savage master. The life less corpse was torn from him, and mangled, to be consumed; but neither Captain H——nor myself could look upon the horrid mess, and several others were similarly affected; but Satan gloated over it, and cursed the others for depriving him of the whole.

"Our sufferings had now reached the limit of human endurance. We were unable to stand at the pumps even half-hour spells; and if we ceased to lighten the vessel we must soon founder. In this, our last extremity, it was at last agreed to cast the fatal lot, to ascertain who was to die to save the rest. We could sustain the gnawing of hunger no longer. Every article of leather, even our shoes, had been consumed. We were all assembled upon the quarter-deck, to bide our fate. Sunk and dispirited as we were by famine, we all clung to life with a more intense desire than we had ever done in more prosperous times. The arrangements were thus made:—a large china jar was placed upon the binnacle, into which was put a scroll of paper for each person on board, cut and folded exactly alike. On one was wrote, 'Gracious God, pardon my sins, and receive my soul, for Jesus' sake.' On the other, 'Merciful God, require not this innocent blood at my hands.' He that drew the first was to die, and he that drew the second was to be the executioner. All the other papers were blank. Everything was prepared before us in the most equitable manner. A period of thrilling suspense intervened, and, all being ready, the captain walked first, placed his hand in the jar, and drew a lot. In like manner, every one on board followed him, each holding his doom in his hand unopened until all was drawn. Another fearful pause ensued. Each feared to unroll his paper. Good God! the fatal scroll was in my hand, and Satan was to be my butcher!

"I yet shudder when I call to mind the agony of that moment. All eyes beamed joy, I thought, that they had

escaped. I was for a moment stupified. Then my brain seemed to whirl round—the light forsook my eyes—I became incapable of reflection; yet a nervous, convulsive energy made me plead for mercy—a mere instinctive effort; for, had I been able to command my thoughts, they would have satisfied me that there was no hope. Satan stood by my side, with the knife in his hand, ready for his victim, even yet, when my slumbers are uneasy, I see his tall, hideous figure, rendered, at the time, doubly frightful by famine, standing over me, his knife at my throat, and Captain H—— in vain endeavouring to hold his hand. My agony and pleadings so melted the whole sufferers, that it was resolved to delay my death until the shades of night had once more covered the ocean, in hopes some ship might heave in sight before my fate was sealed; if not, the morning never was to dawn for me—that day was to be my last in time. Captain H—— kneeled, weeping, by my side. He was joined by all the crew, except the satanic planter, in heartfelt devotion, and earnest supplication for my deliverance. Alas! I could not mould my own thoughts to prayer: a thousand wandering fancies crowded through my mind, making all dark chaos, save the lurid coruscations of the horrors of dissolution. Their prayers and supplications sounded in my ears as if they were the noise of broken water on a reef of rocks, in a gentle breeze; and if I mechanically joined, or kept imploring pardon and mercy through Jesus for my many sins, it was not prayer, for I felt neither peace nor hope while I called. My heart seemed to take little interest in what my lips were uttering. All appeared as if I had been suddenly thrown to the bottom of a mine in utter darkness. Then, again, the glowing sun, that the day before seemed stationary in the heavens, so slow had appeared his progress, now seemed to whirl with fearful velocity, as I occasionally cast up my despairing eyes to mark his progress.

"It was now past noon. Captain H——still sat by my side, with my hand clasped affectionately in his, doing his utmost to prepare my soul for the great change. I began slowly to recover from the stupor caused by the sudden announcement of my horrid doom. I joined in prayer with him. Never again will I be more fit to die than I became towards the evening. I told the captain of the vessel I was now ready to submit to my lot. He could not answer me, his heart was too full; the tears rolled down his rugged face, and with a groan he retired to his cabin. Satan, who had eyed me from the first as if he repined at the delay I had obtained, came forward. The men turned their backs. Captain H——rose to his feet and pushed him back, saying I had been allowed to live until sundown, and I should have full time allowed. Some of the crew joined him. As for myself, I had become weary of my horrible suspense.

"As had been the daily practice since our misfortunes began, several of the crew had been stationed in our remaining mast-head, to look out for any vessel that might come in sight; even yet several continued to crawl up, to gaze over the expanse of waters, in hopes of relief. Often through this day had my imploring eyes been fixed on them with anxious looks. Even while I felt weary of my suspense and wished it over, hope would steal over my mind; there was yet some space ere sunset, and my prayers for pardon, spite of myself, would end in supplications for deliverance. Suddenly a faint shout arose from the mast-head. It was repeated. I started up, and involuntarily joined, as it ran along the deck, the blessed cry, 'A sail in sight!' There was life in the sound. Many wept, while others laughed aloud. Some clasped their hands in silence, and raised their eyes to heaven. I sank upon my knees; tears of gratitude to God poured from my eyes, words were denied me, but my heart burned within me with love. I arose and joined the crew, who were gazing over the side at the welcome sight, which

was nearing us fast. We fired a gun and hung out a signal of distress, as the sun was now fast sinking in the west. She still neared us; but darkness was coming fast, and fearing to lose her, a lantern was fixed on the top, and minute guns were fired. The strange vessel occasionally replied; and during this last night of our misery no eye was closed. Each flash of her gun, less distant as she replied, acted upon our depressed minds, inspiring hope. Faint as the wind was, it was evident that she neared us, and we steered our almost waterlogged hulk towards the flash of her guns, in the best manner we could. When morning dawned, she was within a quarter of-a-league of us. We now made her out to be a Portuguese merchantman; but had she been an Algerine cruiser, we would have hailed her with delight. A boat put off from her, and was soon alongside. The officer who came on board was shocked to witness our misery; for indeed we resembled spectres more than men. She proved to be a Portuguese trader of the largest class, bound for Brazil, laden with supplies. Captain H——, who was acquainted with the captain, and spoke a little Portuguese, having been several times in Lisbon, acted as interpreter. Language was not required to tell our miserable state. The Portuguese acted with the utmost humanity, and stayed by us for two days. The captain himself came on board with the first boat load of supplies, and superintended their serving out—as great an act of humanity as furnishing them; for the people on board the Transsean, now that provisions were on board, became actually mutinous to obtain them—each man thinking he alone could have eat the whole supply, so ravenous did our appetites feel We were, at first, only served with half a biscuit each, steeped in wine Impatient as we were for this and much more, as soon as it was given by our benefactors, numbers loathed it, and could not swallow the morsel. I thought, upon receiving my portion, it was cruel mockery of our wants to give so little. My desires were

all for food, food; yet, when I put the first bit into my mouth, a sickness came over me—my stomach refused to receive it. Thus I sat with what my soul longed for in my hand, yet unable to enjoy it, conscious that my existence depended upon it; yet it was by several violent efforts I succeeded in swallowing it. Soon after I fell sound asleep. All were not affected in the same manner. Some devoured their allowance and pleaded for more, which was, for a space, refused, until it was thought safe to gratify the calls of hunger with more solid food. In about four hours I awoke from my sleep, with the most intense craving for food, much more so than I had felt during the famine. Captain H—— I found still asleep in his berth, to which he had retired. Ten of the crew of the Portuguese vessel were at our pumps and in charge of the vessel; for our own crew were incapable of any exertion. All energy seemed to have forsaken us, now that help had been so mercifully bestowed upon us. Gradually the allowance of food was increased to us, and next morning our vigour began gradually to return. Fortunately the weather was very fine. Our deliverers lay close to us during the night; their boats had been passing between the vessels with all they could spare to supply our wants, and their own men cheerfully undertook the task we ourselves were incapable of. Having done all for us they could, even assisting to refit and search for the leak, on the evening of the second day they bade us farewell, and proceeded on their voyage, amply rewarded for their kindness. The Portuguese captain made, at parting, a present to Captain H—— of six bottles of wine and some other necessaries; for he was now confined to his berth, the privations he had so long endured having made him very feverish and unwell.

On the third day after we parted from the generous Portuguese, we reached the mouth of the Tagus, when the pilot came on board. He had almost left the vessel again, so great was his alarm and surprise at our wretched appear-

ance. We resembled a spectre ship. The Traussean was refitted and ready to sail; but we resolved not to proceed farther in her. We could as readily get a passage from Lisbon to Britain as from Amsterdam; and what would have induced me to leave her more than what I had suffered in her was the presence of the hated Satan. A feeling of horror crept over me every time I saw him, after that fearful day during which I was doomed to death. His malign eyes were never off me, as he sat like a rattlesnake fascinating a poor squirrel or bird. I did not fear him; it was loathing that made me recoil from him. I could have encountered him in single combat with a feeling of satisfaction; but he gave me or no one a just ground of quarrel, and it was not my nature to fix one on him.

"Having settled with the captain of the Dutch vessel, and removed our luggage to the hotel, we remained several weeks, during which Captain H—— rapidly recovered. To amuse ourselves, we visited the English resident in the town; but our chief resort was to the house of Mr. B——, a Scottish merchant, who had a family of two sons and a daughter—the young lady a most engaging girl, and very beautiful. Captain H—— used to spend the most of his time in this family; and gradually I could observe a change in his manner and conversation. He became more gay and cheerful in his manner, at times; then, again, he would resume all the melancholy he felt at our first acquaintance. I was, for some time, at a loss to imagine what caused this change of temper in him. One day, as we sat at breakfast, talking over old adventures, he said—

"'Square, I have observed that you have been rather surprised at my manner of late. In truth, I do not wonder at it. I am not less surprised at it myself. That bewitching girl, Helen, has made a fool of me, I believe. The truth is, I love her to distraction, and fear to acknowledge it to myself; yet truth will out.'

"Then, leaning his head upon his hand, he sighed heavily, 'Poor Eliza!' I made no reply for a few minutes, as I was taken by surprise, and knew not what to say. I was, involuntarily on my part, made his confidant. He told me that he had not as yet declared his passion to Helen, and feared to do so, lest he should be rejected by her, as there was a young Portuguese noble very marked in his attentions. Jocularly, I began to laugh him out of his fears, and urged a bold attempt to win her, if she was his choice, now that he was rich enough to forego all toil and care; for Bachelor Hall was but a lonely dwelling. Before noon, we parted—he to declare his unalterable love; I to make some calls upon a few Scotch friends I had picked up. The day passed on cheerfully. I was returning to our hotel as the shades of evening began to fall, having an appointment with Captain H——to attend a party in the evening. I was posting quickly along, when, at the Church of St. Geremino, a little distance from our hotel, I saw a crowd collect suddenly. My way led through the narrow thoroughfare. I passed on, resolved not to stop, when the words 'Assassinated; poor gentleman!' fell upon my ear. Urged by curiosity and humanity, I bustled through the crowd. In the centre lay the captain, weltering in his blood. In a moment, he was supported in my arms. Opening his eyes, he recognised me, and said—

"'Square, I have been cowardly murdered by some villain.'

'Urging silence upon him, I had him immediately conveyed home to our hotel, and the surgeon sent for to examine his wound. To my great joy, it proved not fatal, but dangerous. The poniard had taken, fortunately, an upward direction—entering the left breast, and passing outwards to the top of the shoulder. For several days he lay dangerously ill. In such a city as Lisbon, it was of no use to offer a reward or make inquiries after the assassin, even

had death ensued. Mr. B—— and his sons called regularly upon him every day, to inquire after him and visit his sick-bed. After he was able to sit up, Helen, attended by her brothers, waited upon him. I was present at their interview. The captain, on the day of which I have spoken before, had called upon Helen, resolved to know her sentiments of him, and either declare his love or to banish her from his mind. The Portuguese noble was also present when he called. Helen's preference had been too apparent; yet no opportunity offered for him to declare his passion. His rival watched with jealous care, and seemed determined to wait him out; yet no animosity appeared in his manner; all was, to appearance, joy and mirth. The captain bade Helen adieu, to keep his appointment at the British Consul's; Helen gave him her hand to kiss: an interchange of looks had fired the Portuguese to madness; quickly he had followed; and, as he thought, slain his hated rival. All this had been discovered shortly after the event. But to return.

"When Helen and her brothers entered, the captain lay upon his couch, propped up with pillows. She approached, pale, and evidently overcome by emotion; joy beamed in the captain's eye; he stretched forth his hand to welcome her, and she was in the act of presenting hers, when the captain's hand sank, and he fell back upon the pillows, pale and overcome. His eye was fixed upon her hand, which had sunk by her side. We looked on in astonishment. In a few minutes the captain recovered, and was the first to speak—

"'Excuse this burst of feeling I cannot control; this moment has recalled to memory the most miserable event of my life. Lady, that ring?' pointing to her hand with a melancholy smile.

"'I got it from my poor cousin at her death,' she said.

"'Thank God!' the captain ejaculated. 'It was once

mine; the gift of one I loved dearer than life—my dear Eliza, now no more."

"While he said this, the brothers looked upon each other astonished, while Ellen hung her head, and turned deadly pale. The whole party were much embarrassed, until the captain gave them an account of his first love, and its fatal issue. During the recital I could see the tears swim in Helen's eyes. She took the ring from her finger, and presented it to the captain, who kissed it with fervour, and placed it upon his bosom for a moment, saying—

"'Dearest Helen, will you be to me all that Eliza was, and allow me to keep this as a token of your promise, until I am thought by you and your relations worthy of you?'

"Helen blushed, and made no reply; but her eyes were eloquent. Her brothers said they felt themselves honoured, and would consult their father. All were now happy. The elder brother told us the history of the ring, as far as he knew, as follows:—

"Their cousin Katherine, a young lady of great expectations and good fortune, had been betrothed to a Scotchman in Holland, where she resided with her mother, a widowed sister of their father's; before their marriage, her lover, who had fallen in a duel on the frontiers of France, had given her the ring. After his premature death, she had fallen into a bad state of health, and come to Lisbon to reside, where she breathed her last in the arms of Helen, bequeathing her the ring and other jewels of value.

"Captain H—— now removed to the house of Mr B——, his acknowledged father-in-law to be. I remained no longer in Lisbon than a few weeks after the ceremony, when I bade adieu to Captain H—— and his bride, and embarked on board the Emelie for London, many pounds the poorer for my stay in Lisbon; yet rich: I was possessed of several

hundred pounds; my mind was more harassed how to lay them out to advantage than it had been to earn them. In truth I was so unstable in my resolves, I sometimes wished I was once again as poor as I was when I left Edinburgh first with Captain H——"

END OF VOL. VII.

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WILSON'S

TALES OF THE BORDERS,

AND OF SCOTLAND.

THE DOOM OF SOULIS.

"They roll'd him up in a sheet of lead—
A sheet of lead for a funeral pall:
They plunged him in the caldron red,
And melted him—lead, and bones, and all."—LEYDEN.

A GAZETTEER would inform you that Denholm is a village beautifully situated near the banks of the Teviot, about midway between Jedburgh and Hawick, and in the Parish of Cavers; and perhaps, if of modern date, it would add, it has the honour of being the birth-place of Dr. Leyden. However, it was somewhat early on a summer morning, a few years ago, that a young man, a stranger, with a fishing-rod in his hand, and a creel fastened to his shoulders, entered the village. He stood in the midst of it, and, turning round—"This, then," said he, "is the birth-place of Leyden—the son of genius—the martyr of study—the friend of Scott!"

Few of the villagers were astir; and at the first he met—who carried a spade over his shoulder, and appeared to be a ditcher—he inquired if he could show him the house in which the bard and scholar was born.

"Ou, ay, sir," said the man, "I wat I can; I'll show ye that instantly, and proud to show you it, too."

"That is good," thought the stranger; "the prophet is dead, but he yet speaketh—he hath honour in his own country."

The ditcher conducted him across the green, and past the end of a house, which was described as being the school-house, and was newly built, and led him towards a humble building, the height of which was but a single storey, and which was found occupied by a millwright as a workshop. Yet, again, the stranger rejoiced to find that the occupier venerated his premises for the poet's sake, and that he honoured the genius of him who was born in their precincts.

"Dash it!"* said the stranger, quoting the habitual phrase of poor Leyden, "I shall fish none to-day."

And I wonder not at his having so said; for it is not every day that we stand beneath the thatch-clad roof—or any other roof—where was born one whose name time will bear written in undying characters on its wings, until those wings droop in the darkness of eternity.

The stranger proceeded up the Teviot, oftentimes thinking of Leyden, of all that he had written, and occasionally repeating passages aloud. He almost forgot that he had a rod in his hand—his eyes did anything but follow the fly, and, I need hardly say, his success was not great.

About mid-day, he sat down on the green bank in solitariness, to enjoy a sandwich, and he also placed by his side a small flask, containing spirits, which almost every angler, who can afford it, carries with him. But he had not sat long, when a venerable-looking old man saluted him with—

"Here's a bonny day, sir."

The old man stood as he spoke. There was something prepossessing in his appearance he had a weatherbeaten face, with thin white hair; blue eyes, that had lost somewhat of their former lustre, his shoulders were rather bent; and he seemed a man who was certainly neither rich nor

* This was a common expression of Leyden's, and, perhaps, was in some degree expressive of his headlong and determined character.

affluent, but who was at ease with the world, and the world was at ease with him.

They entered into conversation, and they sat down together. The old man appeared exactly one of those characters whom you will occasionally find fraught with the traditions of the Borders, and still tainted with, and half believing in, their ancient superstitions. I wish not to infer that superstition was carried to a greater height of absurdity on the Borders than in other parts of England and Scotland, nor even that the inhabitants of the North were as remarkable in early days for their superstitions, as they now are for their intelligence; for every nation had its superstitions, and I am persuaded that most of them might be traced to a common origin. Yet, though the same in origin, they change their likeness with the character of a nation or district. People unconciously made their superstitions to suit themselves, though their imaginary effects still terrified them. There was, therefore, a something characteristic in the fables of our forefathers, which fables they believed as facts. The cunning deceived the ignorant—the ignorant were willing to deceive themselves; and what we now laugh at as the clever trick of a *hocus-pocus* man, was, scarce more than a century ago, received as a miracle—as a thing performed by the hand of the "prince of the powers of the air." Religion without knowledge, and still swaddled in darkness, fostered their idle fear; yea, there are few superstitions, though prostituted by wickedness, that did not owe their existence to some glimmering idea of religion. They had not seen the lamp which lightens the soul, and leadeth it to knowledge; but having perceived its far-off reflection, plunged into the quagmire of error—and hence proceeded superstition.

But I digress into a descant on the superstitions of our fathers, nor should I have done so, but that it is impossible to write a Border tale of the olden time without bringing them forward, and, when I do so, it is not with the inten-

tion of instilling into the minds of my readers the old idea of sorcery, witchcraft, and visible spirits, but of showing what was the belief and conduct of our forefathers. Therefore, without further comment, I shall cut short these remarks, and simply observe, that the thoughts of the young stranger still running upon Leyden, he turned to the elder, after they had sat together for some time, and said—

"Did you know Dr. Leyden, sir?"

"Ken him!" said the old man; "fifty year ago, I've wrought day's wark beside his father for months together."

They continued their conversation for some time, and the younger inquired of the elder if he were acquainted with Leyden's ballad of "Lord Soulis."

"Why, I hae heard a verse or twa o' the ballad, sir," said the old man; but I'm sure everybody kens the story. However, if ye're no perfectly acquaint wi' it, I'm sure I'm willing to let ye hear it wi' great pleasure; and a remarkable story it is—and just as true, sir, ye may tak my word on't, as that I'm raising this bottle to my lips."

So saying, the old man raised the flask to his mouth, and, after a regular fisher's draught, added—

"Weel, sir, I'll let ye hear the story about Lord Soulis:—You have no doubt heard of Hermitage Castle, which stands upon the river of that name, at no great distance from Hawick. In the days of the great and good King Robert the Bruce, that castle was inhabited by Lord Soulis.* He was a man whose very name spread terror far and wide; for he was a tyrant and a sorcerer. He had a giant's strength, an evil eye,† and a demon's heart; and he kept his *fami-*

* He was also proprietor of Eccles, in Berwickshire, and, according to history, was seized in the town of Berwick; but tradition saith otherwise.

† There is, perhaps, no superstition more widely diffused than the belief in the fascination of an evil eye, or a malignant glance, and, I am sorry to say, the absurdity has still its believers.

*liar** locked in a chest. Peer and peasant became pale at the name of Lord Soulis. His hand smote down the strong, his eye blasted the healthy; he oppressed the poor, and he robbed the rich. He ruled over his vassals with a rod of iron. From the banks of the Tweed, the Teviot, and the Jed, with their tributaries, to beyond the Lothians, an incessant cry was raised against him to heaven and to the king. But his life was protected by a charm, and mortal weapons could not prevail against him."

The seriousness with which the narrator said this, showed that he gave full credit to the tradition, and believed in Lord Soulis as a sorcerer.

"He was a man of great stature, and his person was exceeding powerful. He had also royal blood in his veins, and laid claim to the crown of Scotland, in opposition to the Bruce. But two things troubled him: and the one was, to place the crown of Scotland on his head; the other, to possess the hand of a fair and rich maiden, named Marion, who was about to wed with Walter, the young heir of Branxholm, the stoutest and the boldest youth on all the wide Borders. Soulis was a man who was not only of a cruel heart, but it was filled with forbidden thoughts; and, to accomplish his purpose, he went down into the dungeon of his castle, in the dead of night, that no man might see him perform the 'deed without a name.' He carried a small lamp in his hand, which threw around a lurid light, like a glow-worm in a sepulchre; and as he went, he locked the doors behind him. He carried a cat in his arms; behind him a dog followed timidly, and before him, into the dungeon, he drove a young bull, that had 'never nipped the grass.' He entered the deep and the gloomy vault, and, with a loud voice, he exclaimed—

"'Spirit of darkness! I come!

* Each sorcerer was supposed to have his familiar spirit, that accompanied him; but Soulis was said to keep his locked in a chest.

"He placed the feeble lamp upon the ground, in the middle of the vault; and with a pick-axe, which he had previously prepared, he dug a pit, and buried the cat alive; and as the poor suffocating creature mewed, he exclaimed the louder—

"'Spirit of darkness! come!'

"He then leaped upon the grave of the living animal, and, seizing the dog by the neck, he dashed it violently against the wall, towards the left corner where he stood, and, unable to rise, it lay howling long and piteously on the floor. Then did he plunge his knife into the throat of the young bull, and, while its bleatings mingled with the howling of the dying dog, amidst what might be called the blue darkness of the vault, he received the blood in the palms of his hands, and he stalked around the dungeon, sprinkling it in circle, and crying with a loud voice—

"'Spirit of darkness! hear me!'

"Again he digged a pit, and, seizing the dying animal, he hurled it into the grave, feet upwards;* and again he groaned, while the sweat stood on his brow, 'Come, spirit! come!

"He took a horse-shoe, which had lain in the vault for years, and which was called, in the family, the *spirit's shoe*, and he nailed it against the door, so that it hung obliquely;†

* These are the recorded practices which sorcerers resorted to, when they wished to have a *glimpse* of *invisible* spirits.

† In the account of the trial of Elizabeth Bathgate, wife of Alexander Pae, maltman in Eyemouth, one of the accusations in the indictment against her was, that she had "ane horse-schoe in ane darnet and secriet paint of your dur, keepit by you thairopoun, as ane devilish meanis and instructions from the devill." But the superstitions of the Borders, which it is necessary to illustrate in these Tales, as exemplifying the character of our forefathers, are more particularly dwelt upon, and their absurdity unmasked, in the Tales entitled, "Betty Bathgate, the Witch of Eyemouth;" "Peggy Stoddart, the Witch of Edlingham;" and "The Laidley Worm of Spindlestone Heugh."

and, as he gave the last blow to the nail, again he cried—'Spirit, I obey thee! come!'

"Afterwards, he took his place in the middle of the floor, and nine times he scattered around him a handful of salt, at each time exclaiming—

"'Spirit! arise!'

"Then did he strike thrice nine times with his hand upon a chest which stood in the middle of the floor, and by its foot was the pale lamp, and at each blow he cried—

"'Arise, spirit! arise!'

"Therefore, when he had done these things, and cried twenty-and-seven times, the lid of the chest began to move, and a fearful figure, with a red cap* upon its head, and which resembled nothing in heaven above, or on earth below, rose, and, with a hollow voice,† inquired—

"'What want ye, Soulis?'

"'Power, spirit! power!' he cried, 'that mine eyes may have their desire, and that every weapon formed by man may fall scatheless on my body, as the spent light of a waning moon!'

"'Thy wish is granted, mortal!' groaned the fiend; 'tomorrow eve, young Branxholm's bride shall sit within thy bower, and his sword return bent from thy bosom, as though he had dashed it against a rock. Farewell! invoke me not again for seven years, nor open the door of the vault, but then knock thrice upon the chest, and I will answer thee. Away! follow thy course of sin, and prosper; *but beware of a coming wood!*'

"With a loud and sudden noise, the lid of the massy

* Red-cap is a name given to spirits supposed to haunt castles.

† In the proceedings regarding Sir George Maxwell, it is gravely set forth, that the voice of evil spirits is "rough and goustie;" and, to crown all, Lilly, in his "Life and Times," informs us, that they speak Erse; and, adds he, "when they do so, it's like Irishmen, much in the throat!"

chest fell, and the spirit disappeared, and from the floor of the vault issued a deep sound, like the reverbing of thunder. Soulis took up the flickering lamp, and, leaving the dying dog still howling in the corner, whence he had driven it, he locked the iron door, and placed the huge key in his bosom.

"In the morning, his vassals came to him, and they preyed him on their bended knees that he would lessen the weight of their hard bondage; but he laughed at their prayers, and answered them with stripes. He oppressed the widow, and persecuted the fatherless; he defied the powerful, and trampled on the weak. His name spread terror wheresoever it was breathed, and there was not in all Scotland a man more feared than the Wizard Soulis, the Lord of Hermitage.

"He rode forth in the morning, with twenty of his chosen men behind him; and wheresoever they passed the castle or the cottage, where the occupier was the enemy of Soulis, or denied his right to the crown,* they fired the latter, destroyed the cattle around the former, or he sprinkled upon them the dust of a dead man's hand, that a murrain might come amongst them.

"But, as they rode by the side of the Teviot, he beheld fair Marion, the betrothed bride of young Walter, the heir of Branxholm, riding forth with her maidens, and pursuing the red-deer.

"'By this token, spirit!' muttered Soulis, joyously, 'thou hast not lied—to-night young Branxholm's bride shall sit within my bower!'

"He dashed the spur into the side of his fleet steed, and, although Marion and her attendants forsook the chase, and fled, as they perceived him, yet, as though his *familiar* gave speed to his horses's feet, in a few seconds he rode by the

* If legitimacy could have been proved on the part of the grandmother of Lord Soulis, he certainly was a nearer heir to the crown than either Bruce or Baliol.

side of Marion, and, throwing out his arm, he lifted her from the saddle, while her horse yet flew at its fastest speed, and continued its course without its fair rider.

She screamed aloud, she struggled wildly, but her attendants had fled afar off, and her strength was feeble as an insect's web in his terrible embrace. He held her upon the saddle before him—

"'Marion!—fair Marion! said the wizard and ruffian lover, 'scream not—struggle not—be calm, and hear me. I love thee, pretty one!—I love thee!' and he rudely raised her lips to his. 'Fate hath decreed thou shalt be mine, Marion, and no human power shall take thee from me. Weep not—strive not. Hear ye not, I love thee—love thee fiercely, madly, maiden, as a she-wolf doth its cubs. As a river seeketh the sea, so have I sought thee, Marion, and now, thou art mine—fate hath given thee unto me, and thy fair cheek shall rest upon a manlier bosom than that of Branxholm's beardless heir.' Thus saying, and still grasping her before him, he again plunged his spurs into his horse's sides, and he and his followers rode furiously towards Hermitage Castle.

"He locked the gentle Marion within a strong chamber, he

'Woo'd her as the lion woos his bride.'

And now she wept, she wrung her hands, she tore her raven hair before him, and it hung dishevelled over her face and upon her shoulders. She implored him to save her, to restore her to liberty; and again finding her tears wasted and her prayers in vain, she defied him, she invoked the vengeance of Heaven upon his head; and, at such moments, the tyrant and the reputed sorcerer stood awed and stricken in her presence. For there is something in the majesty of virtue, and the holiness of innocence, as they flash from the eyes of an injured woman, which deprives guilt of its strength, and defeats its purpose, as though Heaven lent its electricity to defend the weak.

"But, wearied with importunity, and finding his threats of no effect, on the third night that she had been within his castle, he clutched her in his arms, and, while his vassals slept, he bore her to the haunted dungeon, that the spirit might throw its spell over her, and compel her to love him. He unlocked the massy door. The faint howls of the dog were still heard from the corner of the vault. He placed the lamp upon the ground. He still held the gentle Marion to his side, and her terror had almost mastered her struggles. He struck his clenched hand upon the huge chest—he cried aloud, 'Spirit! come forth!'

"Thrice he repeated the blow—thrice he uttered aloud his invocation. But the spirit arose not at his summons. Marion knew the tale of his sorcery—she knew and believed it—and terror deprived her of consciousness. On recovering, she found herself again in the strong chamber where she had been confined, but Soulis was not with her. She strove to calm her fears, she knelt down and told her beads, and she begged that her Walter might be sent to her deliverance.

"It was scarce daybreak when the young heir of Branxholm, whose bow no man could bend, and whose sword was terrible in battle, with twice ten armed men, arrived before Hermitage Castle, and demanded to speak with Lord Soulis. The warder blew his horn, and Soulis and his attendants came forth and looked over the battlement.

"'What want ye, boy,' inquired the wizard chief, 'that, ere the sun be risen, ye come to seek the lion in his den?'

"'I come,' replied young Walter, boldly, 'in the name of our good king, and by his authority, to demand that ye give into my hands, safe and sound, my betrothed bride, lest vengeance come upon thee.'

"'Vengeance, beardling!' rejoined the sorcerer; 'who dare speak of vengeance on the house of Soulis?—or whom call ye king? The crown is mine—thy bride is mine, and

thou also shalt be mine; and a dog's death shalt thou die for thy morning's boasting.'

"'To arms!' he exclaimed, as he disappeared from the battlement, and within a few minutes a hundred men rushed from the gate.

"Sir Walter's little band quailed as they beheld the superior force of their enemies, and they were in dread also of the sorcery of Soulis. But hope revived within them when they beheld the look of confidence on the countenance of their young leader, and thought of the strength of his arm, and the terror which his sword spread.

"As hungry tigers spring upon their prey, so rushed Soulis and his vassals upon Sir Walter and his followers. No man could stand before the sword of the sorcerer. Antagonists fell as impotent things before his giant strength. Even Walter marvelled at the havoc he made, and he pressed forward to measure swords with him. But, ere he could reach him, his few followers who had escaped the hand of Soulis and his host fled, and left him to maintain the battle single-handed. Every vassal of the sorcerer, save three, pursued them; and against these three, and their charmed lord, young Walter was left to maintain the unequal strife. But, as they pressed around him, 'Back!' cried Soulis, trusting to his strength and to his charm; 'from my hand alone must Branxholm's young boaster meet his doom. It is meet that I should give his head as a toy to my bride, fair Marion.'

"'Thy bride, fiend!' exclaimed Sir Walter; 'thine!—now perish!' and he attacked him furiously.

"'Ha! ha!' cried Soulis, and laughed at the impetuosity of his antagonist, while he parried his thrusts; 'take rushes for thy weapon, boy; steel falls feckless upon me.'

"'Vile sorcerer!' continued Walter, pressing upon him more fiercely, 'this sword shall sever thy enchantment.'

"Again Soulis laughed; but he found that his contempt availed him not, for the strength of his enemy was equal to

his own, and, in repelling his fierce assaults, he almost forgot the charm which rendered his body invulnerable. They fought long and desperately, when one of the followers of Soulis, suddenly and unobserved, thrusting his spear into the side of Sir Walter's horse, it reared, stumbled, and fell, and brought him to the ground.

"'An arrow-schot!'* exclaimed Soulis. 'Wherefore, boy, didst thou presume to contend with me?' And suddenly springing from his horse, he pressed his iron heel upon the breast of his foe, and turning also the point of his sword towards his throat, 'Thou shalt not die yet,' said he; and turning to the three attendants who had not followed in the pursuit, he added, 'Hither—bind him fast and sure.' Then did the three hold him on the ground, and bind his hands and his feet, while Soulis held his naked sword over him.

"'Coward and wizard!' exclaimed Walter, as they dragged him within the gate, 'ye shall rue this foul treachery.'

"'Ha! ha! vain boasting boy!' returned Soulis, 'thou indeed shalt rue thy recklessness.'

"He caused his vassals to bear Walter into the strong chamber where fair Marion was confined, and, grasping him by the neck, while he held his sword to his breast, he dragged him towards her, and said, sternly, 'Consent thee now, maiden, to be mine, and this boy shall live; refuse, and his head shall roll before thee on the floor as a plaything.'

"'Monster!' she exclaimed, and screamed aloud, 'would ye harm my Walter?'

"'Ha! my Marion!—Marion!' cried Walter, struggling to be free. And, turning his eyes fiercely upon Soulis—'Destroy me fiend,' he added, 'but harm not her.'

"'Think on it, maiden,' cried the sorcerer, raising his

* When cattle died suddenly, it was believed to be by an arrow-shot—that is, shot or struck down by the invisible dart of a sorcerer

sword; 'the life of thy bonny bridegroom hangs upon thy word. But ye shall have until midnight to reflect on it. Be mine, then, and harm shall not come upon him or thee; but a man shall be thy husband, and not the boy whom he hath brought to thee in bonds.'

"'Beshrew thee, vile sorcerer!' rejoined Walter. 'Were my hands unbound, and unarmed as I am, I would force my way from thy prison, in spite of thee and thine!'

"Soulis laughed scornfully, and again added, 'Think on it, fair Marion.'

"Then did he drag her betrothed bridegroom to a corner of the chamber, and ordering a strong chain to be brought, he fettered him against the wall; in the same manner, he fastened her to the opposite side of the apartment—but the chains with which he bound her were made of silver.

"When they were left alone, 'Mourn not, sweet Marion,' said Walter, 'and think not of saving me—before to-morrow our friends will be here to thy rescue; and, though I fall a victim to the vengeance of the sorcerer, still let me be the bridegroom of thy memory.'

"Marion wept bitterly, and said that she would die with him.

"Throughout the day, the spirit of Lord Soulis was troubled, and the fear of coming evil sat heavy on his heart. He wandered to and fro on the battlements of his castle, anxiously looking for the approach of his retainers, who had followed in pursuit of the followers of Branxholm's heir. But the sun set, and the twilight drew on, and still they came not; and it was drawing towards midnight when a solitary horseman spurred his jaded steed towards the castle gate. Soulis admitted him with his own hand into the courtyard; and, ere the rider had dismounted, he inquired of him hastily, and in a tone of apprehension—

"'Where be thy fellows, knave? and why come alone?'

"'Pardon me, my lord,' said the horseman, falteringly,

as he dismounted; 'thy faithful bondsman is the bearer of evil tidings.'

"'Evil, slave!' exclaimed Soulis, striking him as he spoke; 'speak ye of evil to me? What of it?—where are thy fellows?'

"The man trembled and added—'In pursuing the followers of Branxholm, they sought refuge in the wilds of Tarras, and being ignorant of the winding paths through its bottomless morass, horses and men have been buried in it—they who sank not fell beneath the swords of those they had pursued, and I only have escaped.'

"'And wherefore did ye escape, knave?' cried the fierce sorcerer; 'why did ye live to remind me of the shame of the house of Soulis?' And, as he spoke, he struck the trembling man again.

"He hurried to the haunted dungeon, and again performed his incantations, with impatience in his manner and fury in his looks. Thrice he violently struck the chest, and thrice he exclaimed, impetuously—

"'Spirit! come forth!—arise and speak with me!'

"The lid was lifted up, and a deep and angry voice said, 'Mortal! wherefore hast thou summoned me before the time I commanded thee? Was not thy wish granted? Steel shall not wound thee—cords bind thee—hemp hang thee—nor water drown thee. Away!'

"'Stay!' exclaimed Soulis—'add, nor fire consume me!'

"'Ha! ha!' cried the spirit, in a fit of horrid laughter, that made even the sorcerer tremble. '*Beware of a coming wood!*' And, with a loud clang, the lid of the chest fell, and the noise as of thunder beneath his feet was repeated.

"'Beware of a coming wood!' muttered Soulis to himself; 'what means the fiend?'

"He hastened from the dungeon without locking the door behind him, and as he hurried from it, he drew the key from

his bosom, and flung it over his left shoulder, crying 'Keep it, spirit!'

"He shut himself up in his chamber to ponder on the words of his familiar, and on the extirpation of his followers; and he thought not of Marion and her bridegroom until daybreak, when, with a troubled and a wrathful countenance, he entered the apartment where they were fettered.

"'How now, fair maiden?' he began; 'hast thou considered well my words?—wilt thou be my willing bride, and let young Branxholm live? or refuse, and look thy fill on his smooth face as his head adorns the point of my good spear?'

"'Rather than see her thine,' exclaimed Walter, 'I would thou shouldst hew me in pieces, and fling my mangled body to your hounds'

"'Troth! and 'tis no bad thought,' said the sorcerer; 'thou mayest have thy wish. Yet, boy, ye think that I have no mercy: I will teach thee that I have, and refined mercy too. Now, tell me truly, were I in thy power as thou art in mine, what fate would ye award to Soulis?'

"'Then truly,' replied Walter, 'I would hang thee on the highest tree in Branxholm Woods.'

"'Well spoken, young Strong-bow,' returned Soulis; 'and I will show thee, though ye think I have no mercy, that I am more merciful than thou.' Ye would choose for me the highest tree, but I shall *give thee the choice of the tree from which you may prefer your body to hang*, and from whose top the owl may sing its midnight song, and to which the ravens shall gather for a feast, And thou, pretty face,' added he, turning to Marion, 'sith you will not, even to save him, give me thine hand, i'faith, if I may not be thy husband, I will be thy priest, and celebrate your marriage, for I will bind your hands together, and ye shall hang on the next branch to him.'

"'For that I thank thee,' said the undaunted maiden.

"He then called together his four remaining armed men, and placing halters round the necks of his intended victims, they were dragged forth to the woods around the Hermitage, where Walter was to choose the fatal tree.

"Now a deep mist covered the face of the earth, and they could perceive no object at the distance of half a bow-shot before them; and ere he had approached the wood where he was to carry his merciless project into execution—

"'The wood comes towards us!' exclaimed one of his followers.

"'What!—*the wood comes!*' cried Soulis, and his cheek became pale, and he thought on the words of the demon—'*Beware of a coming wood!*'—and, for a time, their remembrance, and the forest that seemed to advance before him, deprived his arm of strength, and his mind of resolution, and before his heart recovered, the followers of the house of Branxholm, to the number of fourscore, each bearing a tall banch of a rowan-tree in their hands,* as a charm against his sorcery, perceived, and raising a loud shout, surrounded him.

"The cords with which the arms of Marion and Walter were bound were instantly cut asunder. But, although the odds against him were as twenty to one, the daring Soulis defied them all. Yea, when his followers were overpowered, his single arm dealt death around.

"Now, there was not a day passed that complaints were not brought to King Robert, from those residing on the Borders, against Lord Soulis, for his lawless oppression, his cruelty, and his wizard-craft. And, one day, there came before the monarch, one after another, some complaining that he had brought dis-

* It is probable that the legend of the "*coming wood*," referred to in the traditions respecting Lord Soulis, is the same as that from which Shakspere takes Macbeth's charm—

"Till Birnam Wood shall come to Dunsinane."

The circumstances are similar.

eases on their cattle, or destroyed their houses by fire, and a third, that he had stolen away the fair bride of Branxholm's heir, and they stood before the king, and begged to know what should be done with him. Now, the king was wearied with their importunities and complaints, and he exclaimed, peevishly and unthinkingly, '*boil him, if you please, but let me hear no more about him.*' But,

"'It is the curse of kings to be attended
By slaves that take their humour for a warrant;'

and, when the enemies of Soulis heard these words from the lips of the king, they hastened away to put them in execution; and with them they took a wise man, one who was learned in breaking the spells of sorcery,* and with him he carried a scroll, on which was written the secret wisdom of Michael the Wizard; and they arrived before Hermitage Castle, while its lord was contending single-handed against the retainers of Branxholm, and their swords were blunted on his buckler, and his body received no wounds. They struck him to the ground with their lances; and they endeavoured to bind his hands and his feat with cords, but his spells snapped them asunder as threads.

"'Wrap him in lead,' cried the wise man, 'and boil him therewith, according to the command of the king, for water and hempen cords have no power over his sorcery.'

"Many ran towards the castle, and they tore the lead from the turrets, and they held down the sorcerer, and rolled the sheets around him in many folds, till he was powerless as a child, and the foam fell from his lips in the impotency

* Dr. Leyden represents this personage as being "True Thomas, Lord of Ersylton;" but the Rhymer was dead before the time fixed by tradition of the death of Lord Soulis, which took place in the time of Robert the Bruce, who came to the crown in 1308, and the Rhymer was dead before 1299, for in that year his son and heir granted a charter to the convent of Soltra, and in it he describes himself *Filius et hæres Thomæ Rymour de Erceldon*

of his rage. Others procured a caldron, in which it was said many of his incantations were performed, and the cry was raised—

"'Boil him on the Nine-stane rig!'

"And they bore him to where the stones of the Druids are to be seen till this day, and the two stones are yet pointed out from which the caldron was suspended. They kindled piles of faggots beneath it, and they bent the living body of Soulis within the lead; and thrust it into the caldron, and, as the flames arose, the flesh and the bones of the wizard were consumed in the boiling lead. Such was the doom of Soulis.

"The king sent messengers to prevent his hasty words being carried into execution, but they arrived too late.

"In a few weeks there was mirth, and music, and a marriage feast in the bowers of Branxholm, and fair Marion was the bride."

HARDEN'S REVENGE.

From a state of high civilisation, it is curious to look back upon the manners and modes of life of our ancestors of barbarous times; and the contrast never can be presented in stronger hues than in the picture of the lives of the old Borderers, who so completely realised Hobbes' theory of the beginning of society (fighting and stealing for their daily bread), and that of the quiet, sedate men of industry and peace of these days, whose blood never rises beyond the degree of the heat of a money-making ambition. A shiver comes over us, when we read of the son killed in a feud, carried in to his mother a corpse; of the father of a family, and the laird of many broad acres, laid before his weeping wife and children, the dead victim of a strife with his next neighbour; of families rendered houseless and homeless, often by a marauding kinsman; of the never-ceasing turmoil, strife, cruelty, and revenge, of the whole inhabitants of that distracted part of our country. We read, pause, tremble, and hug ourselves in the happy thought that we have been born in more auspicious times, when the sword is turned into the ploughshare, the castle into the granary, and the fire of enmity softened and changed into the fervour of love and friendship. Yet, alas! if we carry our thoughts farther, how little may we have to felicitate ourselves on in the pictured contrast? Rudeness has its evils; but is civilisation without them? If the household of the Border chief was begirt with dangers of rieving and spoliation, the domestic *lares* kept it free from the inebriated and demoralised son, whom the genius of civilisation sends from the city haunts of pollution, to lift his hand against his

parent. If the *ingenium perfervidum* of a roving life carried the husband from the arms of the wife, perhaps to be brought home a corpse, she seldom witnessed in him the victim of any of the thousand civilised crimes which render the common thief, the fraudulent bankrupt, the swindler, the gambler, the disloyal-spouse, the drunkard, worse than dead to her. If a well-directed revenge might deprive the inmates of the turret of a rude home, the strength was, at least, free from the inroads of the messenger or poinder, whose warrant has a crueller edge than the falchion of an enemy. We advocate not the cause of robbery, though dignified by the name of war or revenge, or coloured by the hues of a chivalric spirit of daring; but, when we look around us, and see how much civilisation has accomplished for our bodies and our intellects, and how little for our hearts or our morals, we hesitate to condemn our ancestors for crimes which they were taught to believe as virtues, to attribute to them an unhappiness which they viewed as the mere chance of war, and to laud the civilised doings of our own times, when the criminal has not the excuse of a want of proper education to palliate his offences against the laws of his country. We are led into these remarks by some rising reminiscences of the doings of old Wat Scott of Harden, the most gnarled, most crooked, and sturdiest stem of the tree of that old family. He lived in the fifteenth century, the hottest period of Border warfare, and occupied the old seat of the family, Harden Castle—a place of considerable strength, situated on the beetling brink of a dark and precipitous dell, not far from the river Borthwick, and facing a small rivulet which brawled past to meet the larger stream. The place was suitable to the castle and its possessor; for the stronghold contained in security the sturdy riever, and the glen was a species of *massy more* for the cattle which he *made* his own upon the good old legitimate principle of *might*, so much despised in these days of statutory legisla-

tion, when the acts of Parliament extend to twenty times the size of the Bible.

Many anecdotes and stories have been recorded of Walter Scott of Harden; and we ourselves, we believe, have, in prior parts of our work, noticed him favourably. There can be little doubt, indeed, that he was a perfect man—that is, according to the estimate of qualities in the times in which he lived, as gallant in love as he was bold in war; and surely, letting the latter rest on his undisputed fame, the former could not be better proved than by his having, when still a fine bold riever, wooed and won the "Flower of Yarrow," Mary Scott, the daughter of Philip Scott of Dryhope—a young maiden, whose poetical appellation, expressive as it is, would go small way in carrying to the minds of those curious in beauties the perfections she enjoyed from nature. Of the manner in which Harden conducted his operations on the heart of this famous beauty, it may be difficult now to speak with that certainty which is applicable to his seizure and appropriations of his neighbours' live stock generally; but, judging from the analogy of the boldness of his other exploits, and from the circumstance that his father-in-law stipulated in the marriage-contract that he was "to find Harden in horse meat and man's meat, at his tower of Dryhope, for a year and a day, but that (as five barons pledge), at the expiry of that period, his son-in-law should remove *without attempting to continue in possession by force*,"* it may be presumed that the riever was not, in this instance, lost or forgotten in the lover. Old Dryhope *knew* him from the early fame he had acquired; and, while he had no objection to give him the Flower of Yarrow for his wife, he saw the necessity of providing against the occurrence which would, in all likelihood, have taken place, of

* The contract is extant in the charter-chest of the present representative. Neither Harden nor the Flower of Yarrow could write their names.—ED.

Walter taking up his residence at Dryhope Tower, and becoming laird, at the same time that he kept a firm hold of Harden and his other lands. The spirit of *appropriation*, in short, was so strong and overpowering in the heart of the bold chief, that, as was frequently alleged of him, it was dangerous to let him sit down on a creepy stool belonging, to a *bona fide* proprietor; for three minutes' occupancy seemed to produce in him all the effects of the long positive prescription; and he never looked at an article of man's making, or nature's production, without considering whether it were a moveable or a fixture.

The only period of Harden's life in which his peculiar notions of *meum* and *tuum* were lost sight of, was during the sweet moon of his marriage with Mary Scott. For one lunation, the poor Border proprietors were safe; and, if the Harden motto, *Cornua reparabit Phœbe*, had any meaning in it, it was the only moon of his life that did not light him forth to commit some depredation. His marriage, with the slight exception already stated, had no such effect in modifying his appropriating spirit, as marriages now-a-days produce on reclaimed rogues or roués, for Mary Scott although the fairest of all the fair women of her time, had the same relish for cooking other people's kye, that her husband Walter felt in bringing them home. There was not a wife in all the Borders that served up "the feast of spurs" to her lord with greater regularity, and more attention to the rules of proper hussyskep, than the Flower of Yarrow. If Walter came in crying for supper—

> "Haste ye, my dame—what cheer the night?
> I look to see your table dight;
> For I hae been up since peep o' light,
> Driving the dun deer merrilie"—

Her reply was just as spirited and ready;—

> "Are ye sae keen set, Wat? 'Tis weel—
> I'faith, ye'll find a dainty meal;

For it's a' o' the guid Rippon steel,
And ye maun digest it manfullie."

The spirit of the rieveř, inborn, and strengthened by education and example, became, in the case of Harden, as it did in that of many a one else of the Border lairds, a regular household duty; and perhaps a more peaceable husband than he might have felt a difficulty in resisting the authority of so fair a governess as Mary Scott.

In the course of a long period, occupied by Harden in his daily duty and pastime of overturning the rights of moveable property—and sure he must have been a happy man whose hobby was his duty—his helpmate bore him no fewer than six sons, who inherited the spirit of their father, and the beauty of their mother. They came all to man's estate; and there was not one of them who disgraced the principles of education which their father took so much care to instil into them, as well by precept as by the example daily laid before them, of levying black mail, and keeping the dark glen well filled with the cattle of their neighbours. It was the ambition of Harden that each of his sons should be an independent proprietor, who might rieve, in after times, on his own account; and, at the time when our story properly begins, he could count four fine properties which he intended for the inheritance of four of the six youths. Two remained to be provided for; and a point soon came to be mooted at the fireside of Harden Castle—how two fitting lairdships might be acquired for them, so that it might never come to be said, by posterity, that Wat of Harden was unable to steal, or win by power or purchase, a good domain for every one of the sons of the Flower of Yarrow. The great difficulty, of course, lay in the nature of the thing to be acquired, because, unhappily, an estate could not be carried away; and there had already begun to be introduced a practice on the Borders of regulating the rights of land by pieces of parchment skins, whereby the outside of a

sheep—a creature itself easily conveyable—was made to vest a right in the land on which it grazed. No doubt, the charter chest might be carried away, and Walter had courage enough to enable him to accomplish that object; but still there remained many difficulties in the way; doubles of the charters were apt to make their appearance at a future day, and the best fire that could be produced at Harden Castle was not sufficient to burn out the vestiges of proprietorship which the sword of its master could so easily overturn.

As his years increased, the anxiety of the old laird waxed stronger and stronger on the subject which lay nearest to his heart He had often cast his eye on the property of Gilmanscleugh, not far distant; and he had even counted the broad acres, to ascertain if they would make a suitable inheritance for one of his sons. It belonged, also, to a family of Scotts—a circumstance that increased its peculiar fitness for the purpose he had so long cherished, as his son would still be a Scott of Gilmanscleugh, and the injustice of the appropriation would be diminished, by his being chief of the clan, and having a species of superiority over its proprietor. By an unfortunate agreement of tempers, the two families had long remained on a sort of friendly footing; and Harden had never been able to bring about such a feud as might give him a pretext for denouncing Gilmanscleugh at head-quarters, when he might have got the envied property forfeited, and a grant of it to himself No doubt, he had often taken from Gilmanscleugh his kye, but what neighbour had been fortunate enough to escape, and what victim of his cupidity dared to resent an injury where resentment would have brought upon his head an evil a thousand times greater than that attempted to be avenged? It was even a species of favour conferred on a small proprietor to have a theft committed upon him by old Harden, because he was generally sure to be protected against more unscru-

pulous aggressors by the old lion, who liked to preserve what he himself might come to require; and so Gilmanscleugh, like many others, had suffered meekly the contributions laid upon him—for the double object of retaining his old chief's friendship, and preserving the rest of his stock from the hands of the other marauders, who were continually roaming about to take whatever they could violently lay hands upon. The situation of Harden was, therefore, that of the wolf in the fable; but he had never yet been able to come to the resolution of asserting that the lamb had rendered the descending water muddy to him who drank further up the stream. On this important subject he did not disdain to take the advice of Mary, who could see no reason, any more than Walter himself, why the chief of the Scotts should not be able to provide a landed portion for two of his sons, when the whole of Liddesdale and the Debateable Land contained so much good ground lying ready for the taking. She, moreover, was also partial to Gilmanscleugh, and only lamented that it was not large enough to form two good properties; though that, of course, was no reason why it should not be taken, *quantum et quale*, for one of her sons, leaving the other to be provided for by some other estate out of the many that lay around them.

"By my faith, Mary," said Walter, "if Gilmanscleugh had four legs to it, it should not be long the property of its present master."

"And if my Walter had the arms he used to have," replied she. "it should not be long ere it was Harden's. My power hath faded. Formerly, if the Flower of Yarrow had asked Harden to give her Gilmanscleugh for a jointure, it would have been hers ere next morn heard the cock crow in Harden glen, but years bring fears."

"Not to Harden, Mary, love. He knoweth not the meaning of the vile word. Your dished spurs make me as sharp-set now, as they did when the cook was the fairest maid in

Yarrow.* It is these sheep-skin rights, lass, that prevent me from bestowing Gilmanscleugh on one of our sons."

"She who cooks Rippon steel, Wat, needeth a fire," replied she. "Charters will burn. I'll give ye the spurs, if ye'll give me the parchment. It will roast one of Gilmanscleugh's kye."

"But I have no cause of quarrel, Mary," said Harden.

"If I were to swear on the altar at Melrose," replied she, laughing, "that Harden, wishing cows, asked for a cause, there wouldn't a simpleton on the Borders believe my oath. Where be thy wits, Wat? What better cause of quarrel need ye now than you ever did—a good hanger?"

"You would not have me kill my kinsman, Mary, to get his lands for our son? By the moon of our armorials, I've slain enough. Nothing now will make me take a man's life but anger, unless he be an Englishman, and then I'll do it for love."

"There is no use for killing," rejoined she, "I'll give ye the steel feast in the morning, and set ye forth for Gilmanscleugh kine. Take them all, with the pet lamb that frisks before the door, on the green lea, and if this do not make Scott complain, I had no title to be called the Flower of Yarrow. If he complain, ye want no more. Ranshakle the house, bring me the parchment rights, and I'll have a fire 'bleezing bonnilie.' One who hath cooked spurs may cook parchment."

"But there may be copies, Mary—doubles o' the rights," said Wat,

"Aweel, my fire's big enough," answered she. "I've seen ye take fivescore o' sheep in one night, and the deil's in't if ye cannot take two skins."

"Good faith, but thou'rt the Flower o' the Yarrow rievers,

* Mary Scott is well known to have been as famous for the cooking of spurs as for her beauty.

Mary! Now, tell me where I shall get a property for our remaining son?"

"Gilmanscleugh may serve them both," replied she.

These last words were spoken by Mary as she went out of the room; and Walter, having no opportunity of asking what she meant (though, indeed, she meant nothing more than that the property might be large enough to serve both), continued to mutter the words for a time, with a view to ask her for an explanation.

"Gilmanscleugh may serve them both." he repeated. "The woman hath gone mad. It is not enough for one of them. Has she lost the spirit of our house, and brought down her ambition to a mailing? By my faith, Dryhope itself will make up the deficiency; and, if nothing else can be got, Dryhope shall be taken for my youngest."

After this manner old Walter ruminated on the unexplained statement of his wife; and, by repeating it again and again, roused the pride that lay at the bottom of his heart, and made him wax even angry with the wife of his bosom, and she the Fower of Yarrow, and the mother of his six sons. But, angry as he was, he was also weary having been hunting in the forest during the day; and he went to sleep, muttering, as he struggled ineffectually with the drowsy god, some oaths peculiar to himself, and to the effect that, take Gilmanscleugh when he chose, it should not suffice for the portion of two sons.

In the morning he awoke, but did not forget the statement of Mary, that had given a momentary impulse to his bile; and, repairing to the breakfast-room, he found there his six sons and his wife, who, from some fugitive indications of face and manner, appeared to be engaged in some by-plot, in which she was the exclusive actor Her original beauty, which acquired for her the poetical soubriquet by which she was so well known, still vindicated a place among the ravages of advanced age, and her spirit, in place

of falling with her bodily strength, had increased, and was continually breaking forth in expressions of vivacity and humour, which sustained the heart of the old chief, and made her the sun of the domestic circle which she had so long graced with her beauty. She was now in the very height of her most delightful occupation—serving up with her own hands the morning meal of her brave Wat and her six gallant sons, the parallel of whom, for make and manhood, might not again be found in broad Scotland. So happy was she, and so full of the joyous and soul-cheering fire of a woman's humour, that the six youths sat and looked at her with mute expressions of sons whose filial eyes saw, in the Flower of Yarrow, more beauties of mind and person than even exuberant nature had bestowed; and old Wat himself smiled as he gazed upon her, and finally relenquished his *malice prepense*, which had been urging him forward to ask her for an explanation of what she had said on the previous evening—that Gilmanscleugh would suffice for a portion to the two sons of proud Harden. The parties sat down to the morning meal; and as the old chief took off the cover of the first dish, a loud laugh, in which he heartily joined, announced the fulfilment of the spirited dame's promise of the previous evening, for their was nothing beneath it but a pair of spurs, made of shining Rippon steel, and presenting, in their sharp rowels, little power of assuaging the hunger of the youths, who had been hunting in the neighbouring dells, and could have eat, as the saying goes, the horse behind the saddle. Harden knew the meaning of the manœuvre; for he recollected the statement of the dame, that she would present to him the feast of spurs, to send him to Gilmanscleugh for a portion to her sons, and, nothing loth to receive the sharp hint, he exhibited, through his rough growling laugh, the fire and keenness of his rieving spirit, which was now to be gratified by the luxury of an adventure.

"What game shall these Rippon rowels prick us to, Mary?" cried the chief, still laughing.

"A good portion for our youngest," replied she; "the broad acres of Gilmanscleugh, and all the kye thereon, and eke the kist that holds the parchment; which last is to be placed in my safe keeping."

"And why not for our *two* youngest?" rejoined Harden, recollecting with a slight bitterness mixed with his good humour, her former statement. "May not Gilmanscleugh serve both of our unprovided sons? What right have the sons of the Flower of Yarrow to more than the half of what hath served one Scott of Gilmanscleugh? By my faith, Mary! if I had not so good a breakfast before me, I would quarrel with my Flower for her depreciation of the honour of Harden; and were it not for that contract thy father wheedled out of me, I'd seize Dryhope in revenge."

"And forfeit the five pledges," replied she, laughing. "But, Wat, had we not better measure Gilmanscleugh first, before we quarrel about its proportions."

"I have driven too many of his cattle over it to Harden Glen, not to know the breadth of it," said he, keeping up the humour. "But come, my boys, we shall take a better gauge of its dimensions to-day. Harden never rieves by day; but the light of the sun tells us best what the moon may light us to."

And having breakfasted on something more substantial than the dish of spurs, the old laird, and his sons were prepared to sally forth to take a survey of Gilmanscleugh's flock, with a view to those ulterior operations which might have the effect of precipitating its unlucky proprietor into such a quarrel with his sturdy superior as might afford the latter a pretext for carrying his object of ambition into effect. To cover their proceedings, they took with them their hunting-graith, without forgetting the stirrup-cup, or rather without being allowed, by the provident solicitude

of the spirited dame, to forget that essential preparative to a Borderer's forth-going, whether he was bent on hunting, rieving, or wooing. Mounted on their strong shaggy garrons, with bows slung over their shoulders, swords by their sides, and the accompaniment of two wolf-dogs of great size and strength, and a number of stag-hounds, all yelling around, till their voices awakened the sleeping echoes of the glen, and formed a rugged harmony with the long shrill winding of the hunter-horns, they presented in the features of the group, that mixture of the war and the chase, sport and spoliation, which marked all the roving parties of that extraordinary period and still more extraordinary place. The mother of six such sons had presented to her a fair subject of exultation in the party that stood before her; and her eye, which still retained the blue light of that of the Flower of Yarrow, spoke the pride which swelled her bosom, as it passed, in laughing intelligence, from one fair face and manly person to another.

"It was as a hunter I first saw you, Walter, from Dryhope Tower," said she; "and he who hunted for a wife, may well hunt for a portion to her children,"

"If I bring down Gilmanscleugh," replied Wat, laughing, "it will be a higher quarry than the Flower of Yarrow."

"You thought not so then, Wat," rejoined she, in the same spirit; "but love giveth way to ambition. That day thou callest Gilmanscleugh thine own, I will busk me again, as I once busked thy bonny bride, and put thy once-cherished Flower of Yarrow in fair competition with the broad acres of Gilmanscleugh. By my troth, thou wouldst be a bold man to prefer the new love to the old."

"I would not give thee, woman," rejoined he, "for all Branxholm's wide domains, with the whole of Ettrick Forest to boot; so hold thy peace, and apply thee to thy hussyskep; for, by my sword, we will come home hungry men."

And old Wat's horn sounded again among the hills. The signal for starting was well known, and away they dashed down the steep, with that speed which the Borderers always exhibited—a consequence, perhaps, of the habit of getting off with their booty in the fear of a rescue. They were soon out of the sight of the fond dame, who long afterwards sat at the small window on the east side of the tower, listening to the notes of the horn, as they reverberated among the heights, and died away like the parting notes of mountain spirits that seek their dark recesses in the opening morn. A true Borderer's wife, she never feared for the result of an expedition of either hunting or harrying; and, as yet, a prosperous fate, by saving her husband and her six sons from the dangers to which their mode of life exposed them, had visited her with no cause of a wife's sorrow or a mother's affliction. But such was her heroic spirit, that, much as she loved these objects of her affection, she could have acted the Spartan dame over the dead body of the dearest among them, and quelled the bursting heart with the thought that he had died nobly in the vocation to which his fate had called him. It was not that habit had worn out the ordinary solicitude of the female heart; for, if custom had recognised the actions of a rieving female in the affair of moveable property as well as of moveable hearts, we dare to be bold enough to say that Mary Scott would have been as famous as an amazon scaumer, as she was as the Flower of Yarrow. Many an expedition she had planned; and it was often more easy for Harden to satisfy himself as to the number of good cattle he might lodge in the glen, than it was to come up to the expectations of his better half, who, as the ballad says, if he had brought her less than ten, would not have "roosed his braverie." Nor was Harden's wife singular in the possession of these unfeminine feelings of Border heroism; for, as women are

generally seen to take on the hues and complexions of the minds of their lords, the Border dames were generally remarkable for the spirit with which they applauded the deeds of their husbands, and the fortitude with which they bore the consequences, often lamentably tragic, which resulted from the wild life they were habituated to lead. In her present situation, Mary Scott thought only of the fair property of Gilmanscleugh, which she conceived so well suited for the heirloom of her two sons that still wanted provisions; and she had already in her mind's eye the bickering flame that was to consume the parchment rights, and roast the oxen that would serve for the celebration of the new acquisition to the wealth and property of Harden.

Meanwhile the hunting troop spread through the surrounding woods, sounding their horns, but caring less for the dun deer of the Scotch hills than for the black cattle of Gilmanscleugh. They had not proceeded far, being still within the limits of Harden's lands, when they heard the hunting-horn of some party in the distance; and the old chief immediately despatched one of his sons—whom he styled the Forester, from his love of the sports of woodcraft—to prick his garron forward, and ascertain who it was that had the hardihood to drive the dun deer so near to Harden's glen. The young man obeyed, and as he proceeded, he found that the huntsman, whoever he was, had, probably from hearing the sounds of the approaching chief, retired to the westward, with a view to avoid the coming party. This construction on his conduct was the first thought that arose on the mind of young Harden, and it came with the suspicion that the sound of the stranger's horn indicated no other a visiter to the Harden woods than that very Gilmanscleugh against whom his father and mother had been nourishing the schemes which might contribute to the gratification of their ambition. With these thoughts came another—viz., that he, the young Harden,

who was one of the unprovided sons for whom Gilmanscleugh was intended, would contribute to the satisfaction of both his father and mother, if he made short work of the projected scheme, and, by urging the proprietor of the envied property to a quarrel and battle, get quit of him by a bilbo thrust, and thus settle in an instant an affair which apparently occupied a great deal more thought than it was entitled to. The idea brought a whole train of the most delightful cogitations that had ever yet fired his young fancy. He would anticipate the views of his father; set off by contrast the simplicity of his own act—a simple extension of the sword-arm—with the intricate machinery of his parents' scheme of ambition; enjoy the surprise of his father and the wonder of his mother when he told them that he had, by an unlucky quarrel, killed Gilmanscleugh, and asked, with affected simplicity, what would become of the property? show himself the best of the six sons of Harden, and worthy of the best smile of the Flower of Yarrow. The accumulation of rising thoughts and stirring feelings inflamed his mind; and, striking deep the rowels into his garron's side, he pricked forward at the rate of a quick gallop, with the wolf-dog Grim bounding before him, baying forth a deep yell, and his tongue hanging half-a-foot over his bloodthirsty jaws. He kept his pace for a considerable time, and was already far from his father's party, when he saw Gilmanscleugh's dog, also a wolf-hound, and known to him by the peculiarity of his colour, being almost white, bounding away to the left—in the track, doubtless, of his master. The moment the dogs perceived each other in the breathless, foaming condition into which their race had inflamed them, they closed in a fell struggle, and made the wood ring with the sounds of their wrath. Gilmanscleugh heard the affray, and returned to save his favourite hound from the jaws of Harden's, which was so famous throughout the forest, that no animal of its species, or in-

deed of any other in the wood, could stand before it. Coming up, he struck the fierce animal of his chief; and young Harden, coming from behind, upbraided him for assaulting his dog, in such terms of galling abuse that the insulted man turned and laid his hand on his sword. The act was followed by a similar movement on the part of the Forester —in another moment they were engaged in fight, and the period of a minute did not pass away before the young and beautiful son of Harden lay upon the ground, a bleeding corpse!

"Ho, for Gilmanscleugh!" cried the victor, as he sheathed his bloody sword, and saw all the danger of his situation. "Ho, for Gilmanscleugh! and that without blast o' horn; for every tree o' Harden woods will rise up to avenge the death o' the Flower o' Yarrow's favourite son!"

And he struck his horse's sides, and urged him forward, calling out for his dog Wolf, who was as anxious to get out of the clutches of Grim, as his master was to get out of the reach of Harden.

"Wolf! Wolf!" he cried, as he turned round. "For Gilmanscleugh—hame—hame—ho! I have killed a dun deer to-day, whose umbles will tell the seer a sad tale o' our house, and whose corbin bane will bring mony a Harden corbie to Gilmanscleugh."

But Wolf was too firmly in the fangs of Grim; and now Harden's horn was sounding in shrill tones in the hollows, announcing to the unfortunate victor the near approach of the fierce chief, but no longer awaking the ear of the victim, who lay already stiff among the green leaves of the forest. The dogs were still fast, and he must spend as much time in disengaging them as would bring the father of the slain youth to the scene of his sorrow and revenge, or he must braid on with the top-speed of his favourite Sorrel, and leave his dog an evidence of the deed, that, if traced to him, would bring ruin on his home, his wife, and his children,

and all the retainers of Gilmanscleugh. Springing off, and nerved with the force of despair, he flung himself on the wrestling dogs, and laying hold of the throat of Harden's, he clutched it with such strength that the animal opened his jaws, gasping for breath, and turning up his eyeballs beneath the lids, fell on his side; but his revengeful opponent, no sooner free from the gripe which had bound him, seized Grim in his turn; and Gilmanscleugh saw before him an alternation of a process of choking that would consume more than his hurrying moments. There was not an instant for deliberation: seizing his sword, he stuck it into the heart of the dog, and, detaching Wolf, sprung to his saddle, and flew through the forest with the speed of light; while his faithful animal, seeing no longer life in his enemy, forsook his prey and his revenge, and bounded away after his flying master. But too much time had, unfortunately for Gilmanscleugh, been already lost in disengaging the dogs; for the twang of a bow announced to him, as he hurried on, that a messenger more fleet than Sorrel was after him, and, looking round, he saw his faithful attendant fall to the ground, with a long shaft quivering in his smoking side.

"There is my king's evidence left behind me," muttered he, as he stuck the rowels deeper in the sides of his horse. "Wae to Gilmanscleugh when Harden has to avenge the death o' a son slain by his arm! Braid on, good Sorrel, to a flaming stable, and carry your master to what may be sune a lordless ha'!"

The speed of his horse soon took him out of the reach of Harden and his sons—but not before they had seen him in the act of flight, and brought down his dog by an arrow sent from the unerring hand of the old chief's namesake. On coming up to the place where his favourite lay extended dead on the ground, with his face upturned to heaven, and, though partly covered by his bonnet's plume that had fallen down in the flight, displaying too evidently the rigid muscles

of death, his father and his brothers uttered a loud cry of astonishment and grief, and ran to satisfy themselves of the terrible truth, that the beautiful youth was indeed dead. The satisfaction was easy and ready: enough of blood lay in a pool by his side to have carried in its stream two young lives; and a single glance at his pale face struck the mind with the palsy which death in the human countenance so strangely produces. His sword, firmly grasped in his hand, told also a part of the story, which was eked out by the body of the dead Grim and that of his lifeless antagonist, which one of the sons had brought to the place where the group stood, and looked at each other in mute grief. But that was only for a moment. The heavy, tear-filled eye of sorrow of the father changed in an instant, and flashed forth the fire of revenge, and, as every one of his five sons clutched their swords, loud cries rent the air—"Ho! for Gilmanscleugh with the sword and the fire-faggot!" So entirely were the fiery youths led away by the impulse of the new feeling, that they had all remounted their garrons, clanging their drawn swords, and uttering their deep-mouthed cries, without reflecting for a moment that the body of the dead youth had to be disposed of, and that all their party was not able to take Gilmanscleugh Tower, and put its inmates to the sword.

"Hold! ho! my brave sons!" cried the father, as the fire of his revenge beamed through his tears. "Why this hurry? A hundred years would not cool our fire, and a sudden revenge lacketh the fulness of satisfaction. We must take home the body of my dead son to his mother. It will be her duty to swathe it and to lay it out. It is the first time she hath had this work to do; and, as she does it, she will recollect her words of yestreen when she said that Gilmanscleugh would serve for both of my sons. Too true, alas! Gilmanscleugh hath satisfied one; Gilmanscleugh shall satisfy the other."

The youths, burning as they were for satisfaction, saw the necessity of agreeing to the recommendation of their father; and, dismounting again, they lifted the stiff body from among the clotted grass, and, wrapping it in a mantle, laid it over the backs of two of their horses, and proceeded in mournful procession towards home, where Mary Scott as yet sat at the castle window indulging in the meditation to which the expedition of her husband and her sons had given rise. The sounds of the horn that had struck her ear had long ceased, and she pictured to herself the bold party scouring over Gilmanscleugh, the intended inheritance of her son, the Forester, the best beloved of her, as he was of his father, for boldness, filial affection, and beauty. She did not expect them till the evening was far gone, and then it would be her duty and greatest delight to prepare for them the cheerful bickering fire, and the warm refreshing meal, and welcome them to their home and their pleasures with her accustomed looks of satisfaction, her well-chosen words of good-humour, and her questions of success, put in such form as might afford the opportunity of recounting their deeds of arms or woodcraft. Many a time had she enjoyed these highest pleasures of the dutiful wife, affectionate mother, and spirited companion; and there was yet time and opportunity in store for her to enjoy them again with undiminished relish. Casting her eyes over the side of the glen, she saw the procession of her husband and five sons, with the dead body of the sixth, coming slowly along the middle of the dell. This was not the way in which old Wat of Harden usually returned to his castle; there were no cattle driven before him, no winding of his horn among the hills, no whoop of triumph from his rough throat. The slow tread of the horses' feet, as they paced the sod, came upon her ear with a dead, hollow sound; and her heart became busy with its mystic divinations, before her eye could trace all the details of the unusual scene. But feature by feature of

this first representation of a mother's bereavement opened gradually on her view; she ran over the faces of her sons and that of her husband, and soon distinguished the beloved victim; the expressions of the countenances of the bearers told her the extent of the calamity, if the form of the extended body, where Death sat triumphant, and gave forth those indications of his presence which cannot be misunderstood, had left any doubt on her mind that her fair Forester was no more. But her griefs knew no feminine paroxysms; the strength of her nerves enabled her to contemplate even the scene of a dead son with that strange calmness which the strongest feeling can draw from the depths of the mental constitution, as its cover and panoply in the hour of nature's greatest need. As the procession approached, she saw Harden draw his hand over his eyes, and the sobs of the youths fell on her ear. Yet she descended with firmness to meet a sight which, contemplated by a mother, is perhaps the most harrowing that can be exhibited to mortal eye—a dead son, and that son her hope and pride. At the entrance she met her husband, who took her hand, and, as he held it, waved to the conductors to pause in their progress.

"Let them come in, Wat," said she. "I know all—my Forester is dead. Come forward, my sons, and let me see him who was once my pride, and tell me what cruel cause hath reft me of my boy."

The sons came forward, and, taking the body by the head and feet, carried it into the tower, where, having placed it, they stood around, silently looking on what was, an hour before, their beloved brother, in the heyday of youth and beauty.

"Who hath done this deed?" inquired the mother, as she looked on the pale face of her son, with feelings too deep for tears.

"Gilmanscleugh," answered Walter.

The word operated like electricity on the minds of the sons, as they stood silently looking at the corpse. Revenge had for a moment been clouded by grief, and the talismanic influence of the name of the destroyer drew aside the vapours, and exposed again the fiery sun of their resentment. A simultaneous movement carried their hands to their swords, and every face was turned to the door; but the eye of old Walter, looking askance through a bush of shaggy grey brows, watched keenly every motion; and, as they rushed out to raise the cry of destruction to Gilmanscleugh and its master, he called them back, and hurried them into a side-room with grated windows and a strong door, where were contained, as in a stronghold, the title-deeds of Harden, and other valuable things which required security. "Let us consult, my bold youths, let us consult," he said, as he pushed the last one in; and the moment they were all fairly enclosed, he turned the key in the lock, and put it into his pocket.

"Give me the Forester's bloody doublet," he cried to his wife, "with the hole made by Gilmanscleugh's sword in the right breast."

"What mean ye, Wat?" answered Mary, as, lifting her eyes from the face of the corpse, she noticed these extraordinary proceedings on the part of her husband. "Why do you lock up our five sons, when vengeance calls them to Gilmanscleugh? and why ask ye for the bloody vest, which should be the pennon to fly over the smoking ruins of the destroyer's tower? If you are to stop revenge, lock up the mother with her sons; for my heart beats with the pulsations of man's courage, and I will cease to feel as a woman till this blood be avenged. If thou wilt not lead on our sons to Gilmanscleugh, let me undertake the task; and mark well the issue of a woman's foray, when a son's bloody doublet hangs on the point of the spear."

"Recollect ye not your words, Mary?" answered Wat,

hurriedly. "Said ye not that Gilmanscleugh would serve for both our sons? That one lying there is satisfied; by the powers of revenge, the other shall not be disappointed. The doublet! come, wife, the doublet!—and see that you give our sons meat enough, through the west bole of the strong-room, to keep their blood warm and their hearts glowing for three days. Let our dead Forester lie there for that time; but turn his head to Gilmanscleugh. The doublet! come, quick!"

Mary could not understand the meaning of these words; but she well knew that the resolutions of her husband, when determined, were founded on prudence and principle, and beyond the affecting capabilities of mortal man; so she proceeded to take from the body of her son the doublet, which was stained with blood, and perforated in the right breast by the sword which had deprived him of life. Having removed it, she handed it to Walter, who, holding it up to the light, looked through the hole, and, with that strange mixture of a peculiar humour with the deepest seriousness of human nature for which he was remarkable, declared, with a grim smile, that he saw through it the lands of Gilmanscleugh, and the Harden arms over the door of the old tower; then, wrapping up the vestment, he hurried to the outer court, and, binding it to the front of his saddle, mounted, and clapping spurs to his horse, was, in a few moments, away at a hard gallop over the hills.

Confused by these abrupt and incomprehensible proceedings, Mary had not been able to make the necessary effort to get an explanation, though it is doubtful if all her entreaties would have been successful in wringing from the determined and cunning old chief what were his intentions. Returning to the apartment where the dead body lay, she found there a duty which would occupy the time till her husband returned—in watching the corpse of her beloved Forester, and tracing in his rigid, pallid features the traces of those

expressions of his beautiful face which used to extend so much influence over the hearts of his father and mother, and bring love to him from all sides on the rapid wings of sympathetic attraction. On one side lay the corpse she had to watch; at the other were her five remaining sons, enclosed as prisoners, and prevented from executing the revenge with which she burned, or extending to her the comforting and assuasive assistance of their presence and conversation. As she looked on the face of the corpse, she heard the impatient murmurings of her sons, who, burning to get forth to satisfy the yearnings of their hearts, demanded of her, through a small opening in the door, what was the intention of their father in thus keeping them from so just and necessary an object as the vindication of the honour of Harden, and the taking of blood for blood.

"We shall not be balked of our revenge, mother," cried the youngest. "The Forester's blood cries more loudly than the voice of our father. Call the retainers, and break open the door, that we may get free. Haste, good mother!"

"Haste! haste!" added other voices.

"I cannot disobey Harden's commands," replied she, "though the face of this fair corpse seems to beckon me to the satisfaction of a mother's heart, at the price of a wife's rebellion. My Forester's glazed eyes are fixed on me, and say, 'Open, and let my brothers free, that my blood may be avenged.' I cannot obey. Three days you must remain there—three days must the Forester lie in his shroud—then will Harden be back, and he will bring with him the bloody doublet to hang on the point of your spears."

"Whither is our father gone?" rejoined the impatient youths.

"I know not, but these were his words," replied she. "I am to watch my Forester's body, and feed you through the west bole, for three days."

"We cannot survive three days unrevenged, mother,"

said another. "We will take on ourselves the responsibility of release. Send us Wat's John, and he will break down this door. Bethink ye, good mother, that Gilmanscleugh may fly, and the Forester's ghost may wander for twenty moons in Harden's Glen, upbraiding his five brothers for not avenging his death."

"I cannot disobey your father," again said she.

"Then we will force our freedom, mother," cried the third son.

"Disobedient boy, say not the word," answered she. "Wait the three days, and, if you will, nurse during that time your fire; for, if I am not deceived, your father will require of you as much avenging wrath as you have to bestow, when his horn sounds again his return to Harden."

With difficulty did Mary prevail on the impetuous youths to refrain from an effort to effect their freedom. For the three appointed days, she sat in the room by the side of her dead son; and at every meal-hour she handed in the food necessary for the sustenance of her prisoners. Nor did she conceive that she had any title to rest from her watchful labour, or to cease her care of the dead body, even during the hours of night, till she saw his death avenged. The midnight lamp was regularly trimmed, and hung upon the wall, that its glimmering flame might fall upon the pale face of the youth, as he lay rolled up in the shroud which his mother had prepared for him, while sitting by the bier. At the solemn hour of midnight, she sat silent and sad, looked now in the face of the dead, listened to hear if any sound of a horn without announced the approach of her husband, or of a messenger from him, and then inclined her ear, to catch the broken words of revenge muttered by her sons in their sleep, or the strains of mournful lamentations for the death of their brother, which the energy of their grief forced from them at those intervals when their revenge was overcome by the more intense feeling. Groans and

sighs, muttered oaths, sobs, and expressions of impatience, mixed or separate, told continually the workings of their minds. The speech of the dreamer was often mixed with the conversation of those awake; but so well acquainted was the mother with the sounds of their voices, that she could distinguish the one from the other. The question was often put by one who slept—"Are the three days past yet?" and those awake gave him the answer he could not hear. Then some of them seemed to clutch his neighbour in his dreams, and call out, that he had now caught him, and would avenge on him the death of the Forester, accompanying his speech with a struggle, as if he were in the act of stabbing Gilmanscleugh. Another would call to the mother, to know the hour; and, when she told him that it was midnight, or an hour past midnight, he would sigh deeply, as if he felt the hours of the three days winged with lead. Then again, a victim of nightmare groaned with fear, at the vision of the Forester's ghost, and cried, that it would not have long to walk the glen, for that the three days were fast on the wing. The shrill scream of a passing eagle or solitary owl, wakening those who slumbered in a half sleep, was mistaken for their father's horn, and an appeal to the mother was required to rectify the mistake. All these things passed in her hearing, and threw a gloom over her mind, which was not relieved by the look which she every moment stole at the dead face, as it shone white as the shroud in the light of the lamp: but she stood the trial, and continued her watch. The beam of a deadly revenge indicated the steadfastness with which she adhered to her resolution never to rest till she knew that Gilmanscleugh had expiated by his life the murder of her son.

Since the departure of Harden, no intelligence had come from him; and so strange had been his conduct when he went away, that his wife had often to combat the rising thought, that the fate of his favourite son had unsettled

his intellects, and driven him away from the scene of his loss, in some wild dream of superstitious retribution. The locking up of his sons was the very reverse of the conduct which his revengeful nature might have dictated; and the taking with him the bloody doublet, through the sword-hole in which he declared he saw the lands of Gilmanscleugh his own, was far more like the act of a madman, than that of one who had duties to perform to himself, to his wife and children, on that sorrowful occasion, more serious and difficult than he had ever yet been called upon to fulfil. These thoughts rising throughout the dark night, when her ears were pained by the strange noises proceeding from the excitement of her sons, and her eye had nothing to rest on but the dead body of him who lay stretched by her side, stung her with anguish, and filled her heart with boding anticipations of terror. The third night was on the wing; and, though twelve o'clock had passed, there was no appearance of her husband. Her sons had become more than ordinarily restless, and said that, if their father did not make his appearance in the morning, they would disregard all authority, and call to the retainers to break down the door with battle-axes, and set them at liberty. She heard them in silence, and trembled to communicate to them the thoughts that had been passing through her mind as to the sanity and safety of their father. In a little, the restless prisoners began to fall over into their troubled sleep, and the moon, newly risen, sent in through the small windows a bright beam, that lay on the face of the corpse. She had wrought up her mind almost to a conviction that her husband had, in a fit of madness, thrown himself into the Borthwick, or otherwise committed suicide, and figured to her diseased fancy his body placed alongside of her son's, and with that same pale beam resting on it, and exhibiting to her the features which she had so long looked on with delight,

made rigid by the grasp of death. Every sound was now hushed, with the exception of the occasional broken mutterings of her sons, and the notes of the winged inhabitants of the upper parts of the tower, who cawed their hoarse omens to the midnight wanderer in the forest. Every thought that rose in her mind was charged with a double portion of awe; and cold shivers, in opposition to her efforts to be firm, ran over her from head to heel, and precipitated her farther and farther into the depths of her fancied evils. Superstition might have borrowed a thousand aids from the circumstances in which she was placed; but, though she was beyond the influence of the direct operation of that power, the thoughts of evil which she had some reason for indulging, borrowed a part of their dark hue from the clouds in which the mystic goddess is generally enshrined: the individual would indeed have been more than woman who could have sat in the situation in which she was placed, and measured her evils with the gauge of calm reason.

While sunk in these gloomy reflections, a shrill blast of a horn reverberated among the hills. "That is our father's horn!" cried the sons, who awoke with the sound; and Mary herself knew the signal of the approach of her husband. She rose from the side of the corpse, and, looking forth from the window, saw, by the moon's light, Harden himself hastening towards the tower. In a moment he bounded from his horse, and in another he appeared before his wife.

"To horse! to horse! my sons!" he shouted, as he came forward. "Now for Gilmanscleugh, with the fire and the sword of Harden's revenge!"

A loud shout from the chamber where the sons lay announced the relief which this statement brought to their frenzied minds. The door was opened, and the prisoners were set at liberty. Without waiting for refreshment, the

old chief, having cast a look on the dead body, hurried with his liberated sons to the court, where every retainer was summoned to attend his master. A large party was assembled in a very short time, and, with the moon as their guide, the cavalcade, making the castle ring with Harden's war-cry, issued with rapid steps out of the ballium, and took the road to Gilmanscleugh. They arrived at the place of their destination while the moon shone still clear in the heavens; and Harden's sons observed that their father now took no precautions, as was usual in his night attacks, to prevent the assailed party from knowing his approach. He marched them silently, deliberately, and boldly up in front of the tower of Gilmanscleugh, where Scott, who had fondly imagined that his act had not been traced to him, was residing in a security that had been daily increasing, but was now so soon to be ended. The whole party were ranged in front of the devoted tower, and Harden's horn was sounded for entrance. Scott appeared at the window, and asked the pleasure of Harden, and the purpose of his call at that unusual hour, though he well knew to what he owed the fearful visit.

"I have a paper, under the king's hand, to read to thee, Gilmanscleugh," replied Harden.

"We had better read it in the mornin," replied Scott. "Our lights are out in the tower. I will wait ye at yer ain time; but let it be in the licht o' day."

"The moon is Harden's time," rejoined the chief. "If thou wilt not let us in to read it, here, in the light of this torch, brought for the occasion, thou shalt hear the words of majesty. I am only the royal commissioner, and must do my duty."

The torch was held up, and Harden calling forth one of his retainers, who had been a clerk in a convent, ordered him to read a royal charter which he put into his hands. The man obeyed, and read the document which purported,

in the few words of these old land rights, that the king, for the love and favour he bore to Walter Scott of Harden, had conveyed and settled upon him and his heirs the lands, tower, and appurtenances of Gilmanscleugh, which formerly belonged to William Scott, but had fallen to the crown by escheat, in consequence of the constructive rebellion of the said William Scott, in killing the son of Harden, known by the name of the Forester, when engaged in hunting on his father's lands. The charter gave, in addition, full power to the said Walter Scott to take immediate possession of the property, and to adopt all necessary steps for ejecting the former proprietor and his family from the same.

"Thou hast heard read the king's writ," cried the chief. "What sayest thou to the royal authority? I come here peaceably to demand the possession of Gilmanscleugh. If you will consent to depart, and give me up the key of the tower, I will pass my honour for the safety of thee and thine. If not, I will enforce the king's authority. Take a quarter-of-an-hour to decide. I will wait the decision."

This announcement produced surprise on all hands, as well to the unhappy proprietor, who was to be deprived of his lands that had come to him from his ancestors, as to the sons of Harden, who were to be deprived of that species of revenge they had burned for, and considered to be the only one suited to the occasion which called for it—the life of the slayer. While Gilmanscleugh retired to consider of the proposal, the sons of Harden crowded round him, and implored him to retract his condition of extending safety to the person of the murderer of their brother. The old chief—who had already counted all the advantages and disadvantages of the bargain, and saw how much better were the broad acres of Gilmanscleugh, which the king had given him for the loss of his son, than the life of its master, which, although he took, he could make nothing of, seeing that it would vanish in the act of capture—replied calmly,

to their warm entreaties, that the lands were his revenge, and a very good revenge, too; but he promised them that, if Scott did not immediately comply with his request, they would have their pleasure of him and his whole household, to kill, or wound, or burn, or hang, as they chose. This addition roused the spirits and restored the hopes of the sons, who could not suppose that a man would give up his property in the easy manner anticipated by their father. Yet so it turned out; for in a short time Scott appeared again, and stated that, upon condition of him and his household being permitted to go forth safe and free, he would instantly deliver to him the key of the tower. The bargain was struck; and in a short time the extraordinary scene was witnessed of a whole family leaving the home of their fathers on a quarter-of-an-hour's notice, and wandering away to beg a habitation and a meal from those who were their dependants. Scott's wife had in her arms a sucking child, and three other children held by her garments, and cried bitterly as they passed on through the fierce troop, who looked the daggers of a disappointed revenge. A sister of his wife's tended a sickly son of Scott's, who was borne forth on a board carried by two of his retainers; and there was seen, hobbling along, with a long piked staff in her hand, the laird's mother, who had gone to Gilmanscleugh sixty years before, and born in it seven sons and three daughters. Then came Scott himself, with the keys in his hand, at the sight of whom Harden's sons moved involuntarily forward, as the instinctive desire of revenge for a moment overcame the command of their father. The keys were handed forth in dead silence; and the servants of the ejected laird wiped their eyes as they beheld the melancholy scene. They wandered slowly and reluctantly away. Harden looked back as the last of them were disappearing in the wood. "Revenge enough," he muttered —"revenge enough, and to spare." He then entered and

took possession of the tower, in which he left as many of his men as were sufficient to guard it. He then returned with his sons and a part of his troop to Harden, where he found Mary Scott still sitting by the side of her dead son, in conformity with a custom among the Borderers, derived from the land of Odin, that the corpse of a murdered relative should not be committed to the earth till his death was avenged. She looked up in the face of Harden as he entered, and the blue eye of the Flower of Yarrow searched wistfully for tokens of a deed of stern retribution. Such is the power of custom and education, that one of the fairest of women, who, if she had lived in the nineteenth century, might have been a Lady Fanny, and shrunk, according to fashion, from the sight of a murdered worm, deemed it necessary, from duty, and felt it as consonant to the feelings of her sex, to look her disappointment at not observing, on the clothes or arms of her husband and sons, the signs of a wrong righted by blood.

"Is it thus that Harden comes, with bright steel and unsullied clothes, from the house of the murderer of his fairest son?" cried she. "Look at that corpse, and blush deep as the crimson that dyes the lily-lire of our boy. Is there no vengeance, Walter? Is there no satisfaction, my sons?"

"Whether, Mary," replied Harden, "would you accept a charter to the lands of Gilmanscleugh to Harden and his heirs for ever, or the life's blood of its master, as a satisfaction for the death of our boy who lies there, killed by his hand?"

"I would rather enjoy the lands," replied she, "and let the murderer enjoy, if he can, the life that is spared to him. Our revenge is double; for, while life may be painful to him, the lands will yield us pleasure in after years."

"Here, then," said he, "is a charter to the lands of Gilmanscleugh"—holding out the parchment. "I got it from the king as my satisfaction; and now we may indeed say,

as you strangely predicted, that Gilmanscleugh hath served both of our sons."

On the following day, the unfortunate son of Harden was buried; and, long afterwards, the lands of Gilmanscleugh remained in the family under the name of Harden's Revenge.

THE PHYSIOGNOMIST'S TALE.

HILL and valley were clad in the cold and glistening mantle of winter, and the snow floated softly, though chillingly, against the cheek of a young and apparently weary traveller, who was plodding his way along the high road towards Annan. He was a youth of about nineteen, tall and good-looking, apparently of the labouring class, and carried a small bundle on a stick over his shoulder. I happened to be walking homewards in the same direction, and had been for some time watching him with great interest—my attention having been excited by his handsome and intelligent countenance, and by the expression of deep and settled sorrow which clouded it. Absorbed in the gloom of his own thoughts, he seemed not to heed the cold, and bleak, and desolate scene around him; or perhaps it might be more congenial to his feelings than the brightest landscape of summer; for who has not felt, in the first hours of grief and deprivation, a morbid seeking after, and clinging to, objects which serve to cherish and keep alive our feelings of gloom and depression? He started, as if awakened from a dream, when I addressed him with some trifling remark upon the weather; but there was something in the tone of his voice, when he answered me, which increased my prepossession in his favour. After some trifling conversation, I took an opportunity to remark, and to express my sympathy for, his evident dejection, at the same time hinting my wish to know the cause of it, and, if possible, to remove it. Many of my readers will no doubt think this sudden and uncalled-for interest in a perfect stranger romantic and injudicious; but I have rather Quixotic opinions on many

subjects, and, among others, is a love of judging of character by countenance; and if I choose to run the risk of "paying for my whistle," I do but follow in the footsteps of wiser and better men. Events proved, as the reader will learn in the course of this story, that in this instance, at least, my judgment had not deceived me. The young man was evidently affected by the interest which I seemed to feel in him; and, after some little hesitation, said, with a strong Roxburghshire accent, "I feel grateful for your kindness, sir; yours is the first friendly voice I have heard since I left home, and the accents of sympathy fall as soft upon the wounded spirit as the snow-flakes on the warm ground, melting as they fall."

We were now close to my gate, and I invited the lad to enter and refresh himself. This offer he accepted with the warmest thanks; and when seated by the comfortable fire in the kitchen, from which I dismissed for a short time my only servant, he told me the simple tale of his sorrows. I am not enough of a Scotchman to attempt to do justice to his national dialect; so much the better, perhaps, for my English readers; but I fear that what I gain in fluency I shall lose in expression. His name, he said, was Dalzell; he was the son of a respectable and thriving merchant in Kelso, who had given him, in his early years, the best education the place afforded, with the view of preparing him, at a future day, for the ministry; but before he was fifteen years old, his father, who was commonly reputed wealthy, died insolvent, and his mother and he were left in a state of utter destitution. Grief for the loss of her husband, combined with anxiety of mind, occasioned by the unexpected change in her circumstances, shortened the days of his beloved mother, and he was left in the world alone. A neighbouring farmer, pitying his distress, took him into his service, and treated him with the greatest kindness and consideration. In this place he had remained nearly four years,

and had every reason to think that his master looked upon him more in the light of a friend than a servant. He had done his duty faithfully and conscientiously, because it *was* his duty; but he was not happy; his thoughts were constantly reverting to former days, and to his blighted prospects, and he began to feel thoroughly discontented and disgusted with his menial situation, when, all at once, a powerful and absorbing feeling, like Aaron's serpent, swallowed all the rest. He loved! In the moments when his impatient spirit most winced beneath the yoke of servitude, light as it was, one glance at the bright blue eye and winning smile of Grace Douglas was sufficient to chase the cloud from his brow, and to cheer his heart with the thought that he had still something worth living for. She was his master's only daughter, just seventeen, and as bright and beautiful a creature as ever the eye of a lover rested upon. Even her beauty, however, would have failed in making any impression on the senses of the gloomy and discontented youth, had not the better feelings of his heart been excited by her tender sympathy. She knew his story; and, by her silent and unobtrusive attentions, showed her pity for his misfortunes. Her tones of kindness invested her, in his opinion, with a charm beyond mere beauty; his proud heart was melted, and his long-pent-up affections were lavished upon this new object with a violence that alarmed himself. It was not long before he was awakened to the consciousness that his love was returned; but that consciousness, blissful as it seemed at first, only gave additional bitterness to his reflections, when he thought of the difference in their respective situations. Poor, friendless, and dependent, a labourer working for his daily bread, how could he hope to gain the wealthy farmer's consent to a union with his daughter? and without *that* consent, she had said that, much as she loved him, she never would be his. Prompt and impetuous, his resolution was soon

adopted; he could not bear suspense, and was determined to put an end to it at once. He told his master all; told him that he could not bear to deceive him; that he loved his daughter, but that he was well aware it would be madness and presumption in him, situated as he was at present, to hope for his approval of his passion; that he could not live in the presence of the object of his hopeless affection; but that he meant to depart, and to endeavour, by his own exertions in some other sphere of life, to remove what he hoped was the only bar to his wishes—his poverty; his birth and education, he said, were equal to her own, and he trusted that his master had never had occasion to think otherwise than well of his private character. The good farmer was much surprised and affected by this disclosure, and, in reply, spoke in the warmest terms of commendation of his young friend; but said that, as a prudent father, he could not think of giving his consent to a union which the want of means might render an unhappy one to both parties; and that, much as he esteemed him, and grieved as he would be to part with him, he perfectly agreed as to the propriety and necessity of his departure. Next day, followed by the tears and good wishes of all the inmates of the farm, he left the house, a sorrowful but a sanguine wanderer. He had met his mistress before his departure; their parting was sad and tender. He vowed unwavering constancy and attachment, but would not accept an offered pledge of the same kind from her, leaving her free, he said, to think of or forget him. He told her he felt he was meant for better things; that brighter days would come; and that then he would return to prove that he was worthy of her. His intention, he said, was to go to sea; he had always a secret liking for it; and in the war which was now raging, he had no doubt that opportunities of distinguishing himself would present themselves. He was determined to do his duty steadily and perseveringly; her image would be ever

present with him, to cheer him in the hour of danger, and to nerve him to exertion. With such a prize in view, he said, he felt confident in his own resolution, and was sanguine in his hope that fortune would eventually smile upon him.

Such was the simple and affecting tale of the wayfarer. I was as much pleased with the modest, yet firm and determined manner in which he expressed himself, as with the narrative itself. I did not attempt to dissuade him from his purpose, but, on the contrary, urged him to persevere. I told him of the many gallant commanders who had distinguished themselves in the naval annals of their country, and who had risen to rank and fame from as humble a condition as his own. It was with the greatest difficulty I persuaded him to accept of pecuniary assistance to help him on his journey, and then only on the score of its being a loan, which, if he lived, he could at some future time repay.

"I shall never forget your kindness to a friendless stranger, sir," said he, as he grasped my hand at parting. "To have met with such an unexpected friendship at my first outset, I may well consider a favourable omen; and I trust that the recollection of it will act as an additional incentive to prove myself worthy of it."

Years passed on, and I heard nothing further of my interesting acquaintance. In the meantime, I had become a husband and father; and my wife, to whom I had related the story of the young adventurer, felt equally interested with myself in his welfare, and we used often to speculate as to his probable fate. Ten years after the rencounter with which my story commences, I was sitting reading to my wife in the drawing-room, after breakfast, when we were startled by a knock at the front-door, followed by the servant's announcement that a gentleman wished to speak to me. I desired that he might be shown up-stairs, and hastened to meet him, thinking it was one of my neighbours,

from whom I expected a visit. But what was my surprise when a tall, handsome man, with dark, sunburnt features, and whose person was quite strange to me, grasped my hand, and shook it most cordially, at the same time smiling as he watched the doubting scrutiny of my gaze, as a faint recollection of his features crossed my mind.

"I see you are puzzled, my dear sir," said he; "you do not remember me."

"I have a confused idea of having seen features like yours before," said I; "but where or when I cannot at this moment recall to my recollection."

"I do not wonder at your not remembering *me*," replied he; "but your disinterested kindness made an impression on a grateful heart, which neither time nor change have weakened. I am, or rather was, the boy Dalzell—the poor, friendless, desolate wanderer, whom you cheered with your benevolence, and animated by your advice. Do you remember me now?"

"I do—I do," said I, returning his warm grasp; "and most happy am I to see you again, and to see you thus; for I perceive that your sanguine hopes have not been disappointed, and that you have risen from your humble station to one more worthy of you."

"Fortune has indeed favoured me beyond my deserts," answered he. "I told you that my having met so kind a friend at my outset was a fortunate omen; it proved so. I entered the service as a boy before the mast; I am now a lieutenant in His Majesty's navy."

"I congratulate you with all my heart; but your modesty must not attribute your success to good fortune alone, there must have been merit likewise to deserve it. But I forget; I have a new acquaintance to introduce to you—my wife; a new acquaintance, but an old friend, I can assure you; for she has long been acquainted with, and felt interested in, your story."

My wife cordially welcomed him, and expressed her gratification at his return home in health and happiness.

"Alas, madam!" said he, "happiness, I fear, is as far from me as ever. I told my kind friend there, that I felt confident fortune would smile upon me: I was then a sanguine boy. Fortune *has* smiled upon me; I have risen from the humble station in which I commenced my career; I have gained for myself rank and competency; and I am now a disappointed man—the hope that cheered me on in my career is blighted. I returned to the home in which I had left all that was most dear to me in life: I found it deserted; my old master was dead—died in poverty; and Grace—my Grace, was gone, no one knew whither."

We were both too much shocked at first by this announcement to be able to express our sympathy; but, on reflection, I expressed my conviction that there was no cause for serious alarm; that, while there was life, there was hope; and that no doubt he would, ere long, succeed in gaining some intelligence which would lead to the discovery of the orphan's retreat. I told him I would write to some friends in the neighbourhood of Kelso, who would, I was sure, be happy to exert themselves in making the necessary inquiries; and that I was able and willing to accompany him as soon as he thought proper, to assist him in his search. He was much gratified by the offer of my services, which he seemed inclined to avail himself of immediately.

"No, no, my friend," said I; "we have too lately found you, to part with you so easily. You must stay with us a few days at least, until I receive answers from Kelso, and afterwards, when we have succeeded in the object of our search, make this house your home till you have one of your own."

At first he seemed rather impatient at the delay; but gradually became more tranquillised and cheerful. He

gratefully accepted my offer of extended hospitality, and pleased us by the frankness with which he seemed immediately to take us at our word, and to feel himself at home. We were both delighted with him; his manners were as pleasing as his conversation was entertaining. On my requesting him to favour us with an account of his adventures since we parted, he replied, "No one has a better claim than yourself, my dear sir, to be informed of the progress of an adventure of which you witnessed and cheered the commencement; but I feel an unwillingness to commence a story, the hero of which is the narrator, who, to do justice to it, must speak more of himself than is either seemly or agreeable."

"Oh," said I, "do not allow your modesty to stand in the way of our enjoyment. Speak fully and freely, in the consciousness that you are talking to friends, who will be pleased with the narration of the most trifling incidents connected with one in whose fate they have always felt the warmest interest."

He bowed, and without further preface commenced as follows:—"After I left you, I made the best of my way to London, and from thence to Portsmouth, where I volunteered on board the Darcall frigate, fitting out for the Cape station. I was asked if I wanted to ship as an able or ordinary seaman, and replied that I had never been at sea, but that I was active and willing. The lieutenant seemed pleased with my appearance and with my answer. 'You're just the lad for us, then,' said he; 'if you're active and willing, we'll soon make you *able*. I like the cut of your jib, my lad; and, if you perform as well as you promise, I've no doubt you'll make a smart fellow yet. Here, Telford,' said he to a boatswain's mate standing near, 'I give this youngster into your charge; make a man of him.'

"'Ay, ay, sir. Come along, young blowhard,' said he; 'as the first leaftennan has trusted your edicashun to me,

we must saw wood at once, and see what we can make of that block of yourn. Can you handle a marlinspike?'

"'No.'

"'Can you reef or steer, or heave the lead?'

"'No.'

"'Then what the devil *can* you do?'

"'I can read and write, and keep accounts.'

"'Oh, ho!—a reg'lar long-shore gemman!—the makings of a sea-lawyer! And so you can't do nothin' but read and write?'

"'Yes, there's one thing I can do, and am determined to do—to learn everything you will take the trouble to teach me. *You* knew nothing before you were taught—how can you expect *me* to do so?'

"'Well, there's reason in that, anyhow,' said he; 'and if so be you pays attention, why, there's no saying but we may see *you* a bosun's mate some o' these days. But I say, young un, make your number. The poor gulpin doesn't understand me'—(this was said half aside). 'What's your name?'

"'Dalzell.'

"'Dalzell! Dalzell!' said he; 'blow'd if that isn't a Kelso name! Where d'ye hail from, eh?—where d'ye come from?'

"'Scotland.'

"'Ay, that's as plain as the nose on your face, whenever you open your mouth. Now, nobody would never go for to doubt me to be an Englishman by my lingo. But I'll tell you a bit of a secret—I'm a Scotchman born and bred.'

"'Well, I can tell you a secret too, if you'll promise not to tell it.'

"'Speak on, youngster. I'll never blab till you give me leave. I'm as silent as the ship's bell, as never speaks till it's tolled.'

"'Well, then, *Teljord's* a Kelso name, as well as Dal-

zell. Many a penny-bap have I bought, when I was at school, at old Jamie Telford's; and, if I'm not mistaken, I'm speaking to his son.'

"'Did you know the old boy? Bless his old heart! Well, you're right for once in your life, my boy; but how the devil did you find me out?'

"'I've often heard the old man talk of his son Tom, the boatswain's mate; and your name and your talking of Kelso together made me fancy you must be the man.'

"'Well, that beats cock-fighting! Give us your hand, my hearty! I'll stick to you through thick and thin, for the sake of the old town and them as lives in it, and if I don't, call me a liar, that's all, and see what I'll give you. But who are *your* people? I suppose that's part o' the secret you were going to tell me?'

"'It was; and you will keep it?'

"'In coorse; didn't I tell you so afore?'

"I then told him my story, which he heard with great attention, and which evidently increased his respect for me. 'I have often heard tell of your father,' said he, 'and for his sake I'll do all I can for his son. I liked the looks of you before—I like you ten times better now; it shan't be my fault if you don't larn your duty. I'll live to see you an *admiral* yet—who knows? You're right, however, to keep your story secret, for some o' these devil's limbs would be jeering about your being a gemman in a cog, as they calls it, come to sea to wear out his old toggery.'

"The good-hearted fellow kept his promise. Never had scholar a more zealous and indefatigable teacher, and never had teacher a pupil more anxious to avail himself of his advantages. We were detained for nearly three weeks, and I made the most of my opportunities. During the day, my friend Telford employed all his leisure time in initiating me into the mysteries of knotting and splicing, and in teaching me the names and uses of the various ropes; and at night

when there were none to laugh at my awkward exhibitions, he encouraged me to go aloft, and to learn to make active use of my hands and feet. When we went on shore on liberty, he used to hire a boat, and teach me how to handle the oar: in fact, my kind instructor neglected no means of teaching me how to make myself useful. My whole heart and soul were in the matter, and my progress was proportionably rapid; and I was cheered on to redoubled exertion by the kind encouragement of the first lieutenant, who complimented Telford highly on his success. Before the ship sailed, I was on a par, as to qualifications, with many who, without a similar stimulus to exertion, had been some time at sea. I could hand, reef, and—no, I couldn't steer—but I knew all the marks on the lead-line, and had often taken a sly cast. I was constantly on the watch for instruction, always on the alert to start forward when any particular duty was required, and, by evincing a habitual desire to do my duty actively and well, I soon gained ground in the opinion of my superiors. The caterer of the midshipman's mess had been disappointed in his servant, and wished to promote me to that *high* honour. I thanked him heartily for his kind intentions, but declined his offer; as I wished, I said, to learn my duty as *seaman*. This coming to the ears of the first lieutenant, increased his good-will towards me. 'We shall make something of that young man yet,' said he. A circumstance occurred a few days before we sailed, fortunate in its results as far as concerned me, but which might have terminated fatally. The captain's son, one of our midshipmen, a fine boy of thirteen, had been forward on the forecastle with some orders, and, in returning aft again, stopped to look over the gangway. How the accident happened I know not, but he lost his balance, and toppled over into the water. The men were below at supper at the time, but I happened to have just come on deck, and had passed him to go forward, when I heard the plunge,

and, turning round, missed him from the deck. I instantly surmised what had happened, and, raising the cry of 'A man overboard!' I dashed over after him. There was a strong tide running, and objects were indistinct in the dusk of the evening, but I fortunately caught sight of him, and reached him just in time, for he was sinking. By dint of great exertion, I contrived to support him while I edged down to a buoy, some distance astern, to which we clung till taken off by a boat from the frigate. The captain, who was on board at the time, thanked and praised me before the whole ship's company for my gallantry, as he was pleased to call it, in saving the life of his son; and the boy, after whispering to his father, came up to me, and presenting me with his watch, begged that I would accept it as a mark of his gratitude. I have it still. From that day, both father and son behaved with the most marked kindness to me, and took every opportunity of showing their good-will. For some weeks after we sailed for the Cape: nothing particular occurred beyond the regular routine of duty; but, at the end of that time, the captain wanted some one to assist his secretary, and the word was passed round the decks by the master-at-arms, for those who were good writers among the crew, to send in specimens of their penmanship. I was one of the candidates. Our specimens were sent to the captain, and all the writers were ordered aft.

"'Who is the writer of this specimen?' said the captain, pointing to mine.

"'I am, sir.'

"'And is the motto your own?' (It was, 'When a man's foot is on the first step of the ladder, he should never rest till he reach the top.')

"'Yes, sir.'

"'Indeed!—you seem to try to act on that principle. Go on as well as you have begun, and there is no telling where you may stop. In the meantime, you may act as assistant

to my secretary.' He then called the first lieutenant, Mr Barlow, and walked up and down the deck with him some time; after which Mr Barlow beckoned to me to come to him:—'Dalzell,' said he, 'Captain Edwards and myself have both had reason to be satisfied with you since you joined the ship, and, as you have proved yourself to be qualified to assist his clerk, we wish to keep you separate from the ship's company, and to allow you to mess with the midshipmen, if they have no objection.'

"I felt a flushing of the cheek and a fluttering of the heart. I felt that the *first step of the ladder* was under my foot.

"'I hope they can make no objection to me on account of character, sir; and my birth and education place me nearly on an equality with them.'

"'Ah! how came you to be here then? You took to bad courses, I suppose, and so your friends sent you to sea, to reclaim you: was that it?'

"'No, sir. Misfortune and necessity brought me here, united with the love of the profession of a sailor. It is a duty, however, which I owe to you as well as myself, on the present occasion, to appear in my true colours; and to tell you a tale which I would otherwise have kept secret, and which is only known to myself and my kind friend and townsman, Telford, the boatswain's mate.' I then proceeded to relate to him what I have already told you. Both the captain and Mr Barlow appeared to be much interested in my narrative, and were pleased to compliment me upon my independence of spirit, and the clear and distinct manner in which I expressed myself. 'After this,' said Captain Edwards, 'there can be no bar to your messing with the young gentlemen, as I suppose you have no objection to their hearing your story?'

"'None whatever, sir.'

"'Begging your pardon, Captain Frederick,' said Mr Bar-

low; 'I know a midshipman's berth too well, and he may tell of his birth and his misfortunes; but let him know the love, sir, and you'll never hear the end of it.'

"'I daresay you're quite right, Mr Barlow. Dalzell, I have no doubt you will be discreet in your communications, for your own sake.'

"That same day I was admitted into the midshipmen's mess, and was treated by them with the greatest kindness and consideration. My life was now a comparatively easy one, as I had hardly any duty to perform, except that of writing; but I determined in my own mind, if possible, to prove myself as quick as a clerk as I had endeavoured to do as a sailor. I was fortunate enough, in my new capacity, not only to please my immediate superior, but to add to the captain's good opinion of me. One stormy night, as we were nearing the Cape, I was letting go some rope on the poop, the hands having been called out to reef topsails, when something fell heavily upon the deck almost close to my feet. The night was so dark that I could not distinguish what it was; but I thought that a coil of rope, or something of that kind, had been thrown out of the top by the motion of the ship, and I began to feel about, to discover what it might be. My hand touched something soft and warm, and at the same time I heard a faint groan. I immediately gave the alarm, and a quartermaster brought up a lantern, by the light of which we discovered the lifeless body of young Hawkins, one of our midshipmen. He had been up furling the mizzen-royal, had lost his footing, and been precipitated to the deck. Poor fellow! he never spoke again—that groan had been his last. A few days after his death, the captain called the hands out, and told me, before them all, that he had entered me on the ship's books as midshipman, as a reward for my good behaviour; and he had no doubt that the same high sense of duty which had been the means of

raising me to the quarterdeck would incite me to do credit to the appointment. He then told the ship's company to obey my orders for the future as their officer, and then dismissed them. I was immediately surrounded by the midshipmen, all of whom cordially congratulated me upon my appointment, and resolved to have a jollification on the occasion. I was much amused with my old friend Telford, who took the earliest opportunity of touching his hat to me, and calling me Mr Dalzell.

"'Why, Telford, what makes you so distant?' said I, offering my hand at the same time.

"'No, sir, thank ye,' said he; 'I knows my place better nor that. If so be you likes to give us your flipper down in your cabin, well and good; but not here, sir—not afore the people—'twould look too free-and-easy like. I'm plain Tom Telford still; but you've got a handle to your name now, Mr Dalzell.'

"My messmates laughed heartily, and Tom was desired to come down to the berth, where he shook me heartily by the hand, and wished me all manner of success, and then tossed off a tumbler of strong grog in the most approved fashion: nose invisible—eyes raised heavenward—outstretched little finger—gurgling noise in the throat, ending with a suffocating gasp of enjoyment, and a sweeping over his mouth with the cuff of his jacket.

"I pass over a number of trifling incidents in my naval career, and shall proceed at once to the sad catastrophe by which I was deprived of my kind friend and benefactor, the captain, and of most of those with whom I had passed so many happy days. We were lying at anchor in Table Bay, one fine afternoon in November, the 4th of the month. The weather was perfectly calm, but there was a heavy swell, and clouds had been for some time gathering to the northward, and many of our weather-Solomons predicted a storm. In the midshipmen's berth,

however, there were no croakers. It was the eve of the 'Gunpowder Plot,' and many a tale was told of boyish pranks, and of the bonfires and fireworks of schoolboy days. There was no care for the future, no anticipation of evil; all was life, and thoughtlessness, and mirth. Alas! alas! how little did we think what one day might bring forth! At daylight of the 5th, it was blowing a heavy gale from the northward, a quarter from which there is no shelter in Table Bay. The sea came tumbling in in long and heavy surges, and the ship plunged deeply and violently. The hands were called out at ten o'clock—'Down yards and masts!' The fore and main yards were lowered, and the topmasts were struck, and the ship, relieved by the removal of so much top weight, rode more easily. At noon, so little apprehension was felt for the effects of the storm, that a salute was fired in commemoration of the day. The gale gradually increased in violence; and at half-past twelve, after a heavy pitch, the cry was heard, 'The small bower has parted!'—'Let go the sheet!' was the order in reply, followed by the heavy plunge of the anchor. Such a mountainous sea was running at this time, that every soul on board seemed to anticipate the fatal result that followed. The ship was pitching bows under, shipping green seas over all—the sky was murky black—vivid flashes of lightning burst from it almost incessantly—and the loud rattling of the thunder, every now and then, was heard far above the howling of the gale and the roaring of the sea. Every eye was fixed in eager anxiety on the cables, which every now and then were buried in the sea, and then, as the ship rose to the swell, were seen far ahead of her, high above the surface of the water, stiff and rigid as bars of iron.

I know not how it happened, but, amid all the uproar around me, surrounded by faces which spoke but too plainly fears for the result, and conscious that our danger was imminent, I felt a kind of unnatural buoyancy of spirits, a

secret conviction that, whatever might happen, I should escape unhurt. Telford stared at me, and muttered, 'The lad's fey, as they used to say in the North.' At two o'clock, the best bower cable parted, and the spare anchor was let go, but the cable went almost immediately. Our danger was now most imminent; our sole dependence was on our sheet cable; and it was evident to all on board that *that* could not long resist the heavy strain. Our ensign was now hoisted, union downward, that well-known signal of extreme distress; and the mournful booming of our guns seemed to our excited imaginations to be the knell of our passing minutes. At seven o'clock, a cry was heard, which, like an electric shock, was passed from one end of the ship to the other in a moment, stunning the most daring spirits with its dreaded import. The sheet cable had parted, and the ship was at the mercy of the wind and sea. An order was now given for every man to provide for his own safety, and a scene of the greatest confusion ensued. For about ten minutes, the ship continued to drive before the wind, and then struck, with a dreadful crash, upon a reef of rocks, broadside to the shore. The main and mizzen masts were immediately cut away, and the foremast soon after went by the board. To add to our horrors, the gun-room was discovered to be on fire, and in a short time the smoke came eddying up from the different hatchways in such volumes as to prevent any communication with the lower deck. Feeble would have been the efforts of man in opposing the devouring flame; but here, element was fighting against element, and the sea claimed the mastery; the vast bodies of water which were constantly dashing over the ship effected, in about ten minutes, what no human exertion could have performed, and we were saved from a fiery, to anticipate a watery death. The scene on board the wreck was now awful in the extreme; every sea that broke over her swept away new victims; and those who were left clinging

to life with the energy of despair, shuddered, as they missed their companions, in the anticipation of their own approaching doom. Several of the crew, maddened by the horror of a slow and lingering death, plunged desperately into the jaws of their watery tomb, to put an end at once to their suspense; and others, in a vain attempt to reach the shore, were carried out to sea by the eddy, and perished miserably, crying in vain for help from their helpless shipmates. About half-past nine, the poop was washed away, and forming a large raft, afforded a flattering prospect of deliverance. Seventy or eighty of the crew jumped overboard, and, by great exertion, contrived to reach it. We who remained on board watched their motions with intense anxiety, and, for the moment, forgot our own danger in the contemplation of theirs. An involuntary shout burst from us, when we saw them reaching the raft in safety, and borne onwards towards the shore; but, alas! a heavy sea struck the floating wreck when only a short distance from the beach, and, turning it over and over, engulfed all its wretched occupants.

"'Poor fellows!' said Telford, who was clinging to the ring-bolts by my side, 'their cruise is up! They've reached their anchorage, and we may get our ground-tackle ready as soon as we like!'

"'Oh no!' replied I; 'while there's life there's hope, Telford. Keep up your heart, man—we shall weather this bout yet.'

"'Heaven in its mercy grant that *you* may, Mr Dalzell! but there is a weight on *my* heart, a dark feeling that my hour has come. I shall never see the bonny banks of Tweed again—never, never! If you should live, sir, to get back to Kelso, tell my good old father ——'

"'Hold on for your life!' shouted I, as a giant sea came rushing and roaring towards the wreck.

"It burst over us; and when, gasping and half-suffocated, I was able to open my eyes, I looked round—my poor com-

panion was gone. A dark body was visible, for a moment, on the surface of the sea, some forty yards distant, and that was the last I saw of my kind friend Telford. Soon after this, the wreck gave a heavy lurch towards the shore, and then, as the sea receded, rolled back again, and separated into three parts. I caught hold of some part of the floating wreck, and, after being repeatedly washed off, and recovering my station, I contrived to lash myself securely to it, and then exhausted nature found relief in insensibility. When I recovered, I found myself lying on the beach, surrounded by the bodies of my unfortunate shipmates, and, raising myself on my knees, I breathed a silent thanksgiving to Heaven for my almost miraculous escape. Hearing a faint groan near me, I groped my way towards the spot whence the sound proceeded—the night was very dark, but a flash of lightning revealed to me the object of my search. It was the body of a seaman stretched upon his back—the right arm extended on the sand, and the left covering the face. At first I thought it was a corpse that lay before me, so stiff, so cold, so motionless did it seem to be; but, on putting my hand on the breast, I felt the pulsation of the heart, and in a few moments low stifled moanings were heard, like those of a person labouring under the influence of nightmare. I spoke to the sleeper, but without receiving any answer; but, the muttering still continuing, I shook him gently.

"'Holloa!' shouted he, as he started to his feet.

"What was my surprise and delight, when I recognised the voice of Telford, whom I thought I had seen swallowed up by the waves.

"'Telford!' said I, 'is that you?'

"'Why, who else should it be?' replied he; 'eh, old boy, who else should it be?'

"To my great surprise, I now perceived that my poor shipmate was half-seas-over, as we call it.

"'Telford,' said I, 'do you not know me?'

"'Oh, Mr Dalzell! I ax your pardon; I didn't know it was you, seeing that all cats are grey alike in the dark. I've had a reglar snooze; but I hope I may never snooze again, if I'm to have such another dream.'

"'What have you been dreaming about?'

"'Why, sir, I dreamed I was a-drowning, and that I was going down, down, down, when I heard your voice calling out, 'Come, Telford, I'm not an admiral yet;' and with that you took me by the cuff of the neck, and then I opened my eyes, and you had a hold o' me, sure enough. But d—n —ax your pardon, sir,' said he, fumbling about; 'but it's enough to make a parson swear.'

"'Why, what's the matter?'

"'Why, sir, I've lost my call;* no wonder my pipe's put out.'

"'Is that all? You may thank Heaven you did not lose your life. You had little hope of saving it when we last parted.'

"'Indeed! why, then, it can't have been a dream, after all. Blowed if I don't think I'm a little crazy in my upper works; my head is all in a whirl, and there's fifty thousand sparks dancing before my eyes. I say, Mr Dalzell, what was that you said about losing life, and all that gammon? Ax your pardon, sir—hopes no offence,' continued he, laying his hand with drunken familiarity upon my shoulder. 'Holloa! why, you're as wet as a half-wrung swab, and I'm not much better myself! What's the meaning of that?'

"'Why, the meaning of it is, that we have both had a most providential escape from drowning. You must be crazy, indeed, if you have already forgot the sad events of the last few hours. When you were swept off the wreck of the poor old Darcall, I little expected to see you again. I could almost have sworn that I saw you go down.'

"'The wreck!—ay, I remember it all now! Providential

* Silver whistle, used by the boatswain and his mates.

escape, *indeed.* Only think of a man, as my old father used to say, putting an enemy into his mouth to steal away his brains! I had clean forgotten all about it. Howsoever, I'll take my 'davy I was so full of water, that, afore I knowed what I was about, I took rum enough in to make me a *tumbler*—ha, ha!'

"'You seem to treat the matter very lightly, Telford; I see nothing laughable in it.'

"'Why, Lord love your honour, when the grog's in, the wit's out, you know, as the old song says.'

"'But where did you get the grog? You were sober enough, and sad enough, goodness knows, when we parted; and how did you escape?'

"'Why, your honour, I rode ashore on the back of a breaker,* and, as soon as I landed, I knocked my horse on the head, and found a drop of capital rum inside, and, as I was devilish cold and wet, I made a little too free with it mayhap.'

"'Well, well, it's fortunate it's no worse. Can you walk, do you think? We had better make the best of our way to the town.'

"'Walk!—to be sure I can, your honour, though perhaps I may steer a little wild or so; but, if you'll heave ahead, I'll follow in your wake, and then you won't be so apt to notice me if I give a yaw now and then.'

"We soon fell in with a party of light dragoons, by whom we were most kindly welcomed, and who assisted us in making our way to Cape Town. We afterwards heard that these gallant fellows had greatly distinguished themselves during that awful night by their humane daring; forcing their horses into the surf, to rescue the struggling survivors of the crew, many of whom would have perished but for their timely aid. In the town, we met with several of our unfortunate shipmates, to whom and to ourselves the inhabi-

* Breaker—a small cask.

tants behaved with the greatest kindness and attention. At daylight next morning, a mournful sight presented itself; and we then ascertained the full extent of our sad loss. The whole line of beach was thickly strewed with dead bodies, and fragments of the wreck. There were only four officers and about fifty men saved—three of the lieutenants, the purser, surgeon, and two midshipmen, were fortunately on shore at the time of the accident; all the rest of the officers, and about three hundred and fifty seamen, perished. Three waggon-loads of corpses were taken to a place near the hospital, and interred; and about one hundred bodies, dreadfully mangled, were buried in one large pit on the beach, near where they were found. The body of my kind friend, the captain, was never recovered, but those of the other officers were interred, the Sunday following, with military honours. So ended my unfortunate outset in the Darcall. The survivors of her crew were drafted into other ships, and the officers were sent home by the first opportunity. I afterwards joined the Sunbeam frigate, and in due course of time got my promotion in her. As soon as she was paid off, I hastened to Kelso, fondly hoping there to find the prize, the hopes of obtaining which had for years cheered me onwards. You know how I have been disappointed. And now, my kind friends, the story of my adventures is ended."

"Oh," said I, "you have told us the *story*, but not the *whole* story; you have still an account to give of your cruise in the Sunbeam; do not flatter yourself you are going to escape so easily."

"You must excuse me, my dear sir; I am not accustomed to act as my own trumpeter; when Telford comes, he may take the office upon himself."

"What became of that poor fellow? He must be a rough diamond."

"Rough enough; but as good-hearted a fellow, and as

fine a specimen of his class, as ever lived. I wonder he has not been here before this time, for I told him I meant to come here; and he said he would give you 'a hail' as he went past, to let you know I was coming. I suppose he has 'hove to,' as he would call it, by the way."

"But how does he know the place?"

"Oh, he knew the neighbourhood from my description of it immediately; and, said he, 'if I make his number when I get there, some one will tell me where he hangs out.'"

"Well, I shall be glad to see him whenever he comes. Anna, my love," said I to my wife, "Mr Dalzell will be ready, I daresay, to do justice to your luncheon whenever it makes its appearance."

We were comfortably seated at the table, discussing our strawberries and cream, when the sound of a loud shrill whistle thrilled through our ears, followed by a rough hoarse voice, bellowing words which my wife and I could not understand. We both started from our seats, and ran to the window, which was open to admit the cool air, though the blind was down to exclude the sun. Dalzell sat still, and burst out laughing. On drawing up the blind, we saw a stout, dark-looking man, with an open and cheerful countenance, dressed like a sailor. His little shining tarpaulin hat was *flapped* down upon the back of his head, and his long black hair hung in curls about his forehead and ears. His left arm was "absent without leave" from his empty sleeve, and in his right hand he held the little silver pipe which had caused all the commotion.

"Ax your pardon, sir," said he, touching his hat, when he saw me; "I made bold to call the hands out to muster, to see if one Leaftennan Dalzell would answer to his name. Hopes no offence, sir."

"Ah, Telford, my fine fellow, how are you?" said Dalzell, peeping over our shoulders.

"God bless your honour!" said he, respectfully raising

his hat; "I'm as pleased to hear the sound of your voice as if it were the pipe to grog."

"That's saying a great deal, Tom. Why, you sway about *now* as if you were a little top-heavy."

"Oh no, your honour; I've only been freshening the nip* once or twice, and my bread-basket's a little empty."

"Well, come in, Tom," said I, "and we'll try to fill it for you."

Tom was soon established in a comfortable berth in the kitchen, and did ample justice to the good cheer which was placed in abundance before him. As soon as he had good time to shake his cargo into its place, he was summoned into the parlour. At first he demurred a little to change his quarters, saying that he was more in his own place in the galley† than in the cabin; but his reluctance was overcome when he saw spirits and water precede him. When he came in, he stood in the doorway, making sundry bobbing attempts at a bow, twirling his hat round and round, and looking as bashful as a young maiden.

"Come in, Tom," said I. "Sit down, and tell us all your adventures."

Tom, however, was too polite a man, in his own way, to sit down in the presence of his officer, till the lieutenant said—

"Come, come, Tom, bring yourself to an anchor at once."

Thus authorised, he plumped into a chair, and, putting his hat under it, carefully deposited there a large quid of tobacco, which he dislodged from its snug quarters in his left cheek.

"Now, Tom, carry on," said Mr Dalzell.

"Why, your honour," said Tom, slyly glancing at the table, "I'm in no spirits for spinning a yarn just now."

I laughed, and filled a tumbler with whisky and water,

* Sailor's term for taking a dram. † Kitchen.

to which Tom paid his respects with evident satisfaction.

"Mr Dalzell has told us," said I, "of your escape from the wreck of the Dareall—and a wonderful one it was."

"You *may* say that," replied he; "I never had such a narrow squeak in my life."

"But tell us something about yourself, and Mr Dalzell. I suppose you have been in action together?"

"Action!—Lord love ye, sir, we were hardly ever out of it! If I were to tell you all, I'd have nothing else to do for the next week. I always said I'd live to see him an admiral, and I say so still; and if ever man deserved a flag, there sits the man, for a braver officer and a better seaman never trod a plank, though I says it as shouldn't say it, seeing as how I first taught him to reef and steer."

"Come, come, Tom," interrupted Dalzell, "if you are going to spin such a yarn as that, the sooner you cut it the better."

"Ax your honour's pardon, but I must speak. Didn't you save my life in that 'ere action with the Flower-de-louce? Haven't you been the best friend to me I ever had? Haven't you often saved me from the gangway when I've dipped my whiskers too deep into the grog-kid? And can I sit quiet with such a glass as this before me?" emptying the tumbler as he spoke.

"Well, that's enough, Tom. If you're so fond of your grog, you had better get on with your story as fast as you can, for not a drop more shall you taste till you have finished."

"But, bless your heart, sir, how am I to begin? I'm like a marine adrift on a grating, or an ass in a hay-field. I've got lots o' yarns to tell, but I don't know which way to turn myself among them."

"Well," said Dalzell, "I'll go and take a walk, and leave you to your own devices;" and he left the room.

"Now, your honour," said Tom, addressing me, "I'll tell you a famous trick our captain sarved the Johnny Croppōs.* He was a dashing fellow that, and never stuck at nuffen: a reglar fire-eater—'ud face the devil himself. We was a-cruising off the coast of France, when the look-out hails the deck—'A strange sail ahead!' Well, there was crack on everything, below and aloft—clear ship for action—beat to quarters, and all that; and we were soon near enough to see a snug, business-looking craft, brig-rigged, standing to the westward under easy sail. So we fired a gun to leeward, and hoisted English colours, and she did the same, and hauled her wind to join us. When she came within hail, we found she was an English privateer, and the captain of her said he had something of consequence to tell our commander, and he was ordered to come on board. Well, the news soon spread over the ship, that the privateer had seen two French merchantmen at anchor under the guns of a small battery; that he was not strong enough to cut them out himself, and that he had hailed a king's ship the day before to tell her so, but he was not believed.

"'Well,' says our captain, says he, 'I'll have a slap at them at all events.'

"'I'll lead the way, sir, if you'll allow me.'

"'But'—and here they went into the cabin with the first luff; and, after staying there for some time, out they comes, and the captain of the privateer jumps into his boat, and shoves off.

"'You understand?' shouted the skipper to him.

"'Perfectly, sir.'

"Our captain looked as pleased as Punch, and we all saw there was something in the wind. The privateer stood to the French coast under easy sail, and we followed in her wake. Word was passed for volunteers for a cutting-out job, and there wasn't a man o' the ship's company as didn't

* Nautical for "Crapaud"—nickname for the French.

come forward; but they couldn't all go—that was sartain; and there was many a long face amongst those that were not chosen; but the others, you'd a-thought they were going to a *hop* at the point, they were so pleased at the thoughts o' the fun. Well, when we'd got well in sight o' the land, the privateer made all sail, and shaped a course along the coast, and we cracked on in chase; but then we put a drag over the bows to keep us astarn, and though we made a great show, we didn't gain upon her. We all wondered at this strange move, but we wondered still more when we saw French colours flying from our peak, and heard the orders given to fire the bow-chasers, but to aim wide o' the mark. We saw the shot drop into the water, first on the one quarter, then on the other, of the privateer; but devil a one struck her; and she, with her English colours flying, kept peppering away at us with her starn-chasers; but her shot, like ours, all fell wide of the mark. By this time we were well in with the shore, and could see two fine large merchant ships lying at anchor close under the guns of a small battery near the town, which lined the beach of a snug bay. The privateer immediately hauled her wind off the coast, as if afeared o' the guns o' the battery, and we did the same. We could see the beach crowded with people hurrying to look at the running fight between the French frigate, as they thought (she had been one once), and the English privateer. Well, this game lasted for some time; lots o' smoke and noise, for we yawed two or three times to give her a broadside, and to let her get away from us, till at last we gave it up for a bad job, and bore up under easy sail for the bay we had before seen. We stood in, clued all up, and came to an anchor with a very short scope of cable, and brought to, all ready for weighing again. The boats were lowered and manned, and a few jollies * were stowed away in the starn-sheets out o' sight. The beach

* Marines.

was crowded with people anxious to hear the news; even the swaddies,* except two or three sentries, deserted the battery, now that all danger was past, as they thought. Well, the gig pulled towards the shore, just to amuse the Frenchmen, while another boat pulled directly to the battery, and, in quarter less no time, the sentries were knocked down, and the guns were tumbled off their carriages—there were lots o' crowbars and handspikes in the boat. Meantime, two other boats boarded the merchantmen, and afore you could say Jack Robinson, their crews, never dreaming of the English, were secured, their cables cut, and the boats towing them out, without a single shot being fired, or a man hurt. By this time the topsails were at the masthead aboard the frigate, and the anchor weighed, and she stood quietly out of the bay, and hove to. The French ensign was then hauled down, and with three roaring cheers from our ship's company, the red flag of Old England was run up in its stead. In a short time crews were put on board the prizes, the boats were hoisted in, and we shaped our course for the Channel. What do you think o' that now, sir, for a clever move?"

"Capital, capital! I never heard a better. But what part of the play did Mr Dalzell and you act?"

"Oh, I says nuthen. I knows who was the first officer to mount the battery, and who was the man as trod upon his heels; but that is neither here nor there. Kelso for ever! says I. I says nuthen."

I could not help laughing at Tom's expressive "nuthens."

"Kelso for ever, indeed!" said I. "Then the two Kelso men were foremost, eh?"

"It's of no use denying it, sir, or making a secret of what's no secret at all. I believe that job was the 'casion of Mr Dalzell's having a swab tacked to his shoulder."

"A swab!—what's a swab?"

* Soldiers.

"It's what you long-shore gemmen calls an applecat,* I believe, sir; a bunch o' gold yarns a leaftennan wears on his shoulder."

"Oh, ay! I understand."

"Oh, how pleased he was when he got his commission some time after; and pleased was I to see his happy face, for I knowed he was a-thinking of the bonny lass he left behind him at Kelso. I hope he'll soon take her in tow now for life."

Great was the sorrow the good-hearted fellow expressed, when I told him of Dalzell's disappointment. He swore he would find Grace Douglas, if she were above ground; and that he would leave no means untried, as long as he had health and strength to persevere.

"Well, but how did you lose your arm, Tom?"

"Oh, your honour, it was in that 'ere action with the Flower-de-louce. We were blazing away at each other as hard as we could lather, and I had jumped into the main-chains to do something I was ordered, when, crack! a musket-ball strikes me on the arm, and I fell overboard as helpless as a sucking-pig; and I'd have gone down like a pig of lead, if Leaftennan Dalzell hadn't banged overboard after me, and supported me to the rudder chains, where we hung till they gave us a rope. Long life to him! says I—I lost my arm, but I got a pension, and we both on us got lots o' prize money."

At this point of Tom's yarn, Mr Dalzell called to me through the window—

"Here are some young visiters coming, Mr Thomson."

I looked out, and replied—

"Oh, they are my two boys. I forgot to tell you that I am a father as well as a husband. The little fellows have been with their nurse, spending the forenoon at my sister's—the house you see there, through the trees. Let us go and meet them."

* Epaulette.

And out we all sallied, Tom bringing up the rear. As we approached them, the nurse, who was talking and playing with the children, looked up, and, seeing Dalzell, uttered a faint scream, and turned deadly pale.

"Holloa!" said I, hurrying towards her; "what is the matter with the girl?"

My companion, however, was beforehand with me. He rushed past me, caught her in his arms, and, calling her his "dear, dear Grace," kissed her pale cheek till the blood mantled rosy red upon it again; while she murmured, "Dear Edward, then you have not forgot your Grace?"

It was quite a romantic scene altogether, with a slight touch of the ludicrous. There was the girl hanging on Dalzell's arm, half-fainting, her head hanging back, her bonnet off, and her long, fair hair floating in the breeze; while hysterical sobs of joy burst from her every now and then; my little George roaring might and main, and sobbing out, "Naughty man! bite Nelly;" Dalzell, pale and agitated, alternately kissing her cheek and hugging her to his bosom; my wife crying; Tom Telford whirling round and round, waving his hat over his head, and flourishing his empty sleeve in the air; and I, the most sensible person in the group, standing staring in delighted astonishment at this pleasing and unexpected denouement. After the first excitement occasioned by this unlooked-for meeting was over, we all returned to the house, eager to hear Grace Douglas's account of her adventures.

Before she begins, however, I must beg the reader's patience till I relate how she happened to be in my service. About a twelvemonth before, my wife was obliged to part with her nurserymaid, in consequence of her repeated acts of misconduct; and, not being able to replace her in the neighbourhood, she begged me to advertise for one in the public prints. In answer to this advertisement, a young and very lovely woman presented herself, whose appearance imme-

diately prepossessed us in her favour. Her manners were mild and gentle, and such as were little to be expected in one in her rank of life. When asked for a character, she replied that she had never been in service; that she was an orphan, and had none to recommend her; that, if we liked to try her, she hoped and trusted she would give us satisfaction—at least no endeavour should be wanting on her part. She declined giving any account of her family, merely saying that adverse circumstances had obliged her to resort to this means of seeking a subsistence. *She* did not care about wages; all that she wished for was protection and a comfortable home. My wife, much as she was pleased with her appearance and manner, was unwilling to make what she considered the dangerous experiment of engaging an unknown character; but I overruled her objections, in which I was materially assisted by mamma's darling, little George, who, attracted by the mild countenance and sweet voice of the stranger, clung to her side, and cried for her to remain. My wife could not resist the appeal; and Ellen Stewart, as she wished to be called, became one of our family, and soon proved herself worthy of our confidence. The substance of her previous history, as she related it to Dalzell, was as follows:—

A succession of bad crops, and of unfortunate farming speculations, had obliged her father to give up the farm in which they had so long lived happily together. His health had been long declining; and, when he died, she was left almost destitute. She had a maternal aunt, who was willing and anxious to share with her her trifling pittance; but she was determined not to be a burden on one who was hardly able to support herself. At this time our advertisement met her eye, and she immediately hastened to answer it—resolved, under an assumed name, to submit to the duties of a menial station, which she was sure, if her poor but proud aunt were let into the secret, she would indig-

nantly oppose. She had written to her aunt, to assure her of her welfare, but without disclosing the name of her place of abode. She had had, before her father died, two very eligible offers of marriage, which she rejected; for she felt sure, she said, that her own Edward would return. Three weeks afterwards, the long-tried constancy of the lovers was rewarded—mutually rewarded; for they were worthy of each other. I had the pleasure of giving away the bride; and honest Tom enjoyed an extra glass of his favourite grog on the occasion, by way of "wetting his commission," as he called it—Dalzell having installed him as a kind of Jack-of-all-trades in his new establishment. The only drawback to his perfect happiness was, that he never lived to see his master an admiral.

THE GOOD MAN OF DRYFIELD.

"To Let, the Mansion-house of Dryfield. This is a small, genteel, self-contained house, beautifully situated on the banks of the Clyde, with large garden and seven acres of fine arable land attached. Rent moderate. Premises will be shown, and other particulars given, by Mr Pentland, farmer, Minnigrain, near Dryfield, who is also empowered to transact all matters relative to the letting of the house and grounds."

Such, good reader, was an advertisement that appeared in the "Caledonian Mercury" some six-and-twenty years ago. Well, but what on earth has an advertisement of this sort to do with the Border Tales? Patience, kind friend—patience; and, as a certain humorous song—whose title we have forgotten—says, "you shall hear." This advertisement, commonplace as it may seem, possessed some interest for me at the time it appeared; for at that very moment I was commissioned, by a friend then resident in Jamaica, but who was contemplating an immediate return to his native country, to look out for exactly such a place as that described in the announcement above quoted.

Having some recollection of the place myself, which I had casually seen several years before, as I passed on the top of the mail, I felt convinced that it was precisely such a residence as my friend desired. Under this impression, I determined on paying Dryfield a visit, and making a personal survey of the premises. Conform thereto, the following morning found me on the top of the mail. In six hours afterwards, I was at Minnigrain, and in the presence of its worthy occupant, Mr Pentland. He was a decent, sub-

stantial-looking farmer—plain and unsophisticated in his manners, intelligent, and shrewd, with a spice of humour about him which he seemed to have some difficulty in controlling.

Having mentioned to Mr Pentland the purpose of my visit, and my wish to take a look of Dryfield and its premises, he instantly accompanied me thither—having previously provided himself with a couple of keys: one to procure us access to the garden, through which it was necessary to pass to reach the house; the other to admit us to the house itself.

Our way lay through a romantic wood, that grew on a steep bank overhanging the Clyde, and which was traversed by various winding paths. Having taken one of these, we soon threaded the little forest, and, emerging at its western side, found ourselves on a green lawn, at the further end of which stood the mansion-house of Driffel, as it was more shortly pronounced by the natives. It was a compact and comfortable-looking house, but had evidently been long untenanted. Everything around it was running to waste. The honeysuckle, with which its walls had been clothed, had fallen from its fastenings, and was idly sweeping the footpath below; the flower-plats in front were overrun with weeds; the garden was uncropped; and shrubs, bushes, and trees were revelling in an unprofitable luxuriance. Everything, in short, bespoke neglect, and the absence of a presiding care and taste.

"The house does not seem to have been tenanted for a long time, Mr Pentland?" said I, as we walked towards the house.

"'Deed, it's a gey while since there was what ye may ca' a reglar tenant in't," replied my companion. "We hae had families, from time to time, for a month or twa in the summer season, but nae reglar tenant since Mr Darsy himsel left, and that's gaun noo in ten years since."

"Is Mr Darsy dead?"

"Ou no! He gaed abroad for the benefit o' his health—him and his man Ramsay. He was to hae been back in six months, but he has never returned yet. But I'm sure the blessin o' the poor and the needcessitous 'll follow the worthy man wherever he goes."

"He was a benevolent man, was he?"

"That he was, sir. Just ane o' the best men breathin. Some folk thocht him a wee whimsical now and then; but his heart was in the richt place. He had just five hunner a-year; and I'm sure he gied awa three o't in charity, if he gied a saxpence."

"Any family?"

"No; he never was married. It's said that he was ance crossed in love in his younger days; but whether this be sae or no, I dinna ken. There was naebody lived here wi' him but an auld maiden sister, his man Ramsay, and twa servant lasses. His sister's dead; and it's thocht it was partly her death that sent him awa frae Dryfield; for they war just extraordinar attached to ane anither. Just to show you, sir, how worthy a man he is," continued Mr Pentland, "the rent o' this property is, by his orders, to be handed owre to the minister, for the use o' the poor o' the parish."

Just as the conversation had reached this point, we reached the door of the house. Mr Pentland inserted the key, but found some difficulty in turning the lock, from its having become stiff and rusted through disuse. While he was engaged in alternately coaxing and forcing the obstinate bolt, my attention was attracted by an inscription on the stone over the doorway. This inscription was in part concealed by some straggling branches of honeysuckle which had broken loose from their fastenings, and were hanging over it. These I removed with the end of my stick, and having done so, read—

> "To balance fortune by a just expense,
> Join with economy magnificence."

The quotation I remembered was from Pope, and thought it rather a peculiar sort of taste that had placed it where I now saw it.

By this time, Mr Pentland had succeeded in opening the door; and we entered. I found the house to be an excellent one—well finished, commodious, and judiciously arranged.

Having gone through all the rooms, we finished our survey by a visit to the kitchen. On entering this apartment, the first thing that caught my eye was a small board over the fireplace, on which, in gilt letters on a black ground, were the following lines:—

> "To worth or want, well-weigh'd, be bounty given
> And ease, or emulate the care of Heaven;
> Whose measure full o'erflows on human race.
> Mend Fortune's fault, and justify her grace."

"What!" said I, "Pope again?"

Mr Pentland smiled. "Ou ay, sir," he at length said, "Mr Darsy had an awfu wark wi' Pope; and so had his man Ramsay. It was that brocht them first thegither, and it's maistly that has keepit them thegither ever since, nearly thirty year. Mr Darsy was aye gi'ein us screeds o' Pope; and onybody that could quote Pope to him was sure to win his favour, and to get a' the assistance he could gie them in whatever way they micht want it. It was a queer conceit o' his; and mony a time the worthy man was imposed on, by designin folk, through the medium o' this fancy. When ony o' that kind wanted his assistance, they had naething ado but get twa or three lines o' Pope by heart, come to him wi' a lang face, and tak an opportunity o' slippin out the lines, and their business was done. I've seen him actually shed tears when he was quotin his favourite author. He was just clean crazed about him. He made me a present o' the 'Essay on Man,' and gied me nae rest, nicht or day, till I got every line o't by heart."

"But he did you a good service in that, my friend," said I: "it is a noble poem—full of fine thoughts, beautifully expressed."

"Nae doot o't," replied Mr Pentland: "I like the poem weel, and think as much o' Pope as ony man. He is a great philosopher, as well as a great poet; but my excellent friend, Mr Darsy, just carried the thing a wee owre far. His admiration o' him, or rather his constant and open expression of that admiration, bordered on the ridiculous: it amounted to a weakness—although, in other respects, Mr Darsy was a man of great good sense. I've heard him and his man Ramsay—for he's just as great an admirer o' Pope as his master—firin quotations at ane anither for an hour thegither. Indeed they never spoke for five minutes without exchangin a couplet or twa, and seldom conversed on onything else but the merits o' Pope."

In this sketch of the worthy proprietor of Dryfield, I thought I recognised—what I always took much delight in contemplating—an original character; and this was one of the best sort—a compound of oddity and benevolence. What had just been told me of him was enough to excite my curiosity, but far from being enough to gratify it. This, however, I hoped circumstances would yet effect for me; for, feeling amused by Mr Darsy's peculiarities, and interested by his worth, I determined on learning all about him that I could; and ample opportunity for doing so was subsequently afforded me.

Having expressed to Mr Pentland my satisfaction with the house, and my wish to take it, he proposed that we should adjourn to his residence, and there settle the transaction by missive. We did so; and when the business was concluded, Mr Pentland kindly suggested that, as the day was now far advanced, I had better remain with him all night, and return home the following morning with the first coach. To this proposal, seeing that it would afford me an

opportunity of learning something more of Mr Darsy, I at once agreed, and was soon after put in possession, by my good host, Mr Pentland, of some particulars regarding that gentleman, which I have thought might not be found unamusing.

"Of Mr Darsy's early history," said Mr Pentland, who, at my request, began an account of his late worthy neighbour immediately after the dinner-cloth had been drawn, "I do not know much. He was bred, originally, I believe, for the church, but never took orders; for what reason I am ignorant; but have heard it alleged, that it was owing to an extreme diffidence of nature, which shrank at the idea of speaking in public.

"Fortunately, his circumstances, although far from being affluent, were such as to enable him to yield to this timidity; and I am not sure that he ever adopted any regular profession in lieu of the one he abandoned. He bought Dryfield about twenty years since, when he also came to reside there; and it was then my acquaintance with him began. From that period till his departure for France, we lived in the closest intimacy and friendship; and during all that period I never heard or saw anything of him but what redounded to his honour.. To quote his own favourite author—for he set us a' a-quoting Pope—

> 'Him portion'd maids, apprenticed orphans, bless'd—
> The young who labour, and the old who rest.'

He was truly the Man of Ross in all that is kind and benevolent."

"Oh, say," said I, smiling—

> 'Oh, say, what sums that generous hand supply—
> What mines to swell that boundless charity?'"

My kind host laughed heartily, and readily replied—

> "'Of debts and taxes, wife and children clear,
> This man possess'd five hundred pounds a-year.'

"Such a sum, or one thereabouts, was, in truth, all his dependance; yet the good he did with it was amazing.

"When Mr Darsy came first to our neighbourhood, his family consisted of his sister only, and one servant-maid; and it is probable it would never have received any addition, but for the circumstance which added Sandy Ramsay to the establishment—as original a character as his master. Sandy was a sort of general jobber of country work—a good hand at cutting drains, clipping hedges, and felling and thinning timber, making and erecting wooden railings, &c. &c.

"But, besides, and better than all this, Sandy was a learned man. He read a great deal, and was not a little vain of his acquisitions in this way. He was, however, a lively, good-natured little fellow, and very generally liked, notwithstanding that he gave himself out for a philosopher, and looked very grave and wise when he was asserting his pretensions to that character, or when he thought those pretensions were either overlooked or denied.

"Such was Sandy Ramsay, and such was the person whom Mr Darsy found one morning, shortly after his arrival at Dryfield, working at a wooden railing at a little distance from the house.

"'Good morning, honest man,' said Mr Darsy, approaching him with that kindly familiarity of manner which distinguished all his intercourse with his inferiors.

"'Guid mornin, sir,' replied Sandy, resting on the wooden mallet with which he was driving the rails. 'Grand wather for the country, sir.'

"'Excellent,' rejoined Mr Darsy. 'The crops in this neighbourhood look uncommonly well, and I think we shall have both an early and a plentiful harvest. Thanks be to God!'

"'Yes, sir, as ye say, thank God for't,' replied Sandy. 'There's a reasonable prospect o' baith peace and plenty in the country; and, as Pope says,

'This day be bread and peace my lot;
All else beneath the sun,
Thou knowest if best bestow'd or not;
And let thy will be done!'

"'Ah, Pope, my friend!' said Mr Darsy, his eye sparkling with delight. 'So you are conversant with Pope, are you?'

"'A wee bit, sir; his works form the staple o' my readin. I admire baith his poetry and his philosophy.'

"'Ah, indeed! Well, do you know, I like that,' replied Mr Darsy. 'I'm one of Pope's worshippers, too; he is my guide, philosopher, and friend—

Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,
Intent to reason, or polite to please.'

"'Yes, sir; and, better still,' replied Sandy, 'he

'Turn'd the tuneful art
From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart.'

"'And,' shouted Mr Darsy, in ecstasy—

'For Wit's false mirror held up Nature's light—
Show'd erring Pride *whatever is, is right.*'

"'And,' exclaimed Sandy, energetically, and waving his hand aloft, in the excitation of his feelings, as he spoke—

'That reason, passion, answer one great aim;
That true self-love and social are the same.'

"Mr Darsy, striking his stick emphatically on the ground—

'That virtue only makes our bliss below,
And all our knowledge is ourselves to know.'

"Having thus finished the concluding part of the 'Essay on Man' between them, Mr Darsy, with a gracious and benevolent smile, held out his hand to Sandy, seized that of the latter, and shook it with cordial warmth. From that

moment, notwithstanding the disparity of their social position, they were sworn friends.

"In a short time after this, Mr Darsy proposed to Sandy to enter his service, at a fixed rate of wages, to look after his garden, and be otherwise generally useful. To this proposal the latter readily assented; and they have been together ever since, quoting Pope to one another daily, and daily descanting on the merits of their favourite author.

"Having now got an able and active assistant in Sandy Ramsay, and one who had a very competent knowledge of agricultural affairs, Mr Darsy determined on cultivating the few acres of ground which he had bought along with the house of Dryfield. His resolution before had been to let them; but he now bethought him of keeping them in his own hands. These lands had been allowed to run to waste by the former proprietor, who was a great speculator in everything, and in every way, where there was no chance of remuneration. One of these speculations was, to build, at various intervals, over the grounds alluded to, a number of fantastic tower-like structures, for a purpose which none could guess, and which was wholly unknown to all but the contriver himself.

"Whatever the purpose was, however, for which these towers were erected, they were never applied to it. Some other whim struck the noddle of the speculator, and they were allowed (most of them only half-built) to fall into ruins—an eyesore to look at, and an encumbrance to the ground.

"These stone-and-lime vagaries Mr Darsy now determined on removing, and of applying the surrounding lands to their proper use. Full of this design, which had suddenly struck him one day as he was out walking, he hastened, on his return, to the garden where Ramsay was at work, and told him of his intentions.

"'I shall have all these lands laid down in corn, Sandy,' said Mr Darsy.

"'Richt, sir, richt,' replied the former, thrusting his spade into the ground, and resting his elbow on the apex of the upright handle. 'Quite richt, too.'

"'Another year,' said Mr Darsy—

> 'Another *year* shall see the golden ear
> Embrown the slope, and nod on the parterre;
> Deep harvests bury all his pride has plann'd,
> And laughing Ceres reassume the land.'

"'Yes, sir,' replied Sandy—

> ''Tis use alone that sanctifies expense,
> And splendour borrows all her rays from sense.'

"'No doubt of it, Sandy,' said Mr Darsy. 'Beautiful sentiment, and admirably expressed.'

"The project of cultivating the land having been thus settled by the assistance of Pope, Sandy was instructed to look out for the necessary means, proper implements, and, first and most important of all, a pair of good stout draught horses. This last want of Mr Darsy's was one that soon became known throughout the country; and, as Mr Darsy was always reckoned a liberal and punctual man to deal with, he had soon abundance of offers; and they were not a whit the less numerous, perhaps, that he was thought to be no great judge of the article he wanted.

"Amongst those whose ears Mr Darsy's want of a pair of horses reached, was a certain dealer in horse-flesh, of the name of William Craig, as great a rascal as Scotland perhaps ever had the honour of producing; but he was withal a pleasant knave, and always cheated with the greatest good-humour imaginable. The smile was never off his countenance, excepting when he saw it for his interest to look grave, and then he could put on a face of sympathy and sentiment that it would break your heart to look at. He

was, in short, a most plausible and most accomplished scoundrel—clever, and well-informed.

On hearing that Mr Darsy wanted a couple of horses, and that he had already rejected several that had been offered him—

"'I'll try my hand on him,' said Willie; 'and if I dinna fix him, blame me.'

"'Do you mean by gi'ein him a fair bargain, Willie?' inquired the friend to whom he had made the boast above quoted.

"'Never did that in my life to onybody, and I'm no gaun to begin now,' replied Willie.

"'Then, how do you propose to fix him, Willie, as ye ca't?'

"'Leave that to me,' said the honest horse-jockey. 'I'll do him owre as clean's a leek. I'll *trot* him out as cleverly as I ever did ony beast wi' four legs. I hae the secret o' him.'

"'What do you ca' the secret o' him, Willie? What do you mean by that?'

"'Aha, lad! How's your mother?' replied Willie, laughing, and touching the side of his nose emphatically with the point of his forefinger. 'I'll keep my thumb on that till I hae tried it.'

"On that very afternoon, Willie posted off to Dryfield with a couple of horses on which he had practised every secret of his art to give them a passable appearance. On one of the horses Willie himself was mounted; the other he led by a halter; and, thus disposed, arrived at a swinging trot at Mr Darsy's. That gentleman had seen his approach from a window, and, guessing the purpose of his visit, was now at the door to receive him.

"Willie touched his hat:—

"'Heard, sir, that ye war in want o' a pair o' guid workin beasts,' said Willie, 'and hae broucht ye twa prime

anes here to look at. No a bonnier or better pair between this and Johnny Groat's, and just a real bargain as to price.'

"'Why, my good fellow, I certainly do want a couple of good draught horses,' replied Mr Darsy, eyeing Willie's bargain with a scrutinising look; for he had already been so often the subject of attempted imposition in the way of horse-dealing, that he could not help entertaining suspicions of the intentions of every one who approached him for such a purpose. 'I certainly do want a couple of good draught horses,' he said; 'but really, being no great judge myself, and some attempts having been made to take me in, I—I ——'

"'Feth, I weel believe that, sir,' interposed Willie. 'It's just incredible the villany that's practised in this trade o' ours. Some men hae nae conscience, and wad sell their very souls for gould—gould—gould—that curse o' the human race, that some think was

> 'Sent to keep the fools in play,
> For some to heap and some to throw away.
> But *I*, who think more highly of our kind
> (And surely Heaven and *I* are of a mind),
> Opine that Nature, as in duty bound,
> Deep hid the shining mischief under ground.'

That's my opinion, sir,' continued Willie; 'and I houp ye'll excuse the liberty I hae taen o' gi'ein ye't in poetry, but Pope comes tricklin' aff my tongue, whether I will or no, just like water aff a dyuck's back.'

"'Excuse ye, my friend!' said the astonished and delighted Mr Darsy, with a gracious smile. 'My dear sir, your quotation requires no apology. It is appropriate, and to the purpose. A fine idea—tersely and pithily expressed. The man, sir, who studies Pope as he ought to be studied, and who acts on the principles he inculcates, will infallibly secure

'What nothing earthly gives or can destroy—
The soul's calm sunshine, and the heartfelt joy.'

"'Yes, sir,' replied Willie:—

'Say, in pursuit of profit and delight,
Who risk the most—that take wrong means, or right,
Of vice or virtue, whether blest or curst;
Which meets contempt, or which compassion first;
Count all the advantage prosperous vice attains—
'Tis but what virtue flies from and disdains.'

"'It is, it is!' shouted Mr Darsy, in ecstasy. 'Enough, my dear sir, enough,' he said, extending his hand to Willie, while a tear of emotion glistened in his eye. 'Come into the house, and take a little refreshment, and let us see if we cannot make a bargain about these horses. They look very well, and, I daresay, will suit my purpose.'

"'Just the very thing, sir, ye may depend on't,' replied Willie, who had now dismounted, and was holding both horses by the halters. 'There's that black ane, I'm unco sweer to part wi't; but the want o' siller gars a puir man mak mony a sacrifice baith to his interest and to his feelins. O' that black horse, sir, I may safely say there's no his match in the county; yet I daurna, nor wadna, ask his price for him, for it wad be considered just an imposition.'

"'But, my good friend,' interposed Mr Darsy, 'I hope you do not think that I would take advantage of you in any way—that I would avail myself of the urgency of your necessities, to give you less than the just value of your horse. God forbid! You shall have his price, be that what it may.'

"'Oh, I'm no misdootin that, sir, no the least; but ——'

"'I say, my friend, by the way' (here again interrupted Mr Darsy, as they approached the house, being now within a few yards of the door), 'be so good as make no allusion to Pope in the presence of my sister, whom you will likely see; for she, poor woman, has just as little philosoph

about her as the rest of her sex. "Woman and fool," you know—

> 'Woman and fool are both too hard to hit;
> For true no-meaning puzzles more than wit.'

"Willie smiled. 'No far wrang, sir, I daresay. It's, I doot, owre true.'

"'She's a good, kind-hearted creature,' resumed Mr Darsy; 'but if there be any one thing on earth that she abhors above all other things, it is Pope. She cannot endure his name, ever since she read his "Characters of Women;" but you and I, my friend, know that there is more truth in that essay than her sex would willingly allow.

> 'In men we various ruling passions find;
> In women, two almost divide the kind.
> Those, only fix'd, they first and last obey—
> The love of pleasure, and the love of sway.'

"Having now reached the house, Mr Darsy desired Willie to remain a minute in charge of the horses, until he went for his factotum, Sandy Ramsay, whom he wished to see the animals, and whose judgment he meant to consult, as to their purchase. Sandy he found, as usual, in the garden.

"'Here is a decent, honest, well-informed, and intelligent man, Sandy,' said Mr Darsy, 'with a pair of horses for sale, which I wish you to come and look at.'

"'What ca' they him, sir?' inquired Sandy.

"'Why, I don't know; I didn't ask his name,' replied Mr Darsy.

"'I hope it's no Willie Craig,' said the former, drawing on his coat; 'for he's a slippery chiel, Willie; an' I wadna say that even my caution wad be a match for his cunning.'

"'Whether his name be Craig or not, I do not know,' replied Mr Darsy; 'but this I do know, that he seems to be a very intelligent and conscientious man. He is a great admirer of our favourite author, Sandy, and quotes him

with great propriety and facility; and of such a man I would not willingly believe any ill.'

"'He quotes Pope, sir, does he?' exclaimed Sandy. 'Then, sir, he's just the man. That's Willie Craig, beyond a' manner o' doot; and the biggest rogue this day in Scotland.'

"'Come, come, Sandy,' said Mr. Darsy, a little severely, shocked at the idea of a rogue quoting Pope, and disbelieving the existence of such a moral incongruity—'come, come, Sandy,' he said, 'you judge too harshly; you speak unguardedly. The man is, I doubt not, a very honest man; and "an honest man," you know, Sandy, "is the noblest work of God."'

"'I've seen that disputed, sir,' said Sandy; 'an' I think, after a' wi' some success. A man of great parts an' genius is surely a nobler creature than a'.'

"'I'm grieved, Sandy, to find your moral perceptions so weak,' here interrupted Mr Darsy. 'Don't you see, or rather will you not see, that ——'

"'I really canna see, sir,' interrupted Sandy, in his turn 'that ——'

"'Well, but let me explain myself,' again interrupted Mr Darsy; and, having at length obtained this permission, he went on to expound the disputed text, after his own views of its bearings.

"Sandy replied; Mr Darsy rejoined; and a hot dispute, of a good half-hour's continuance, ensued between master and man, on the moral points involved in the quotation; such disputes, by the way, being a frequent occurrence between them; for, although they agreed most cordially on the general merits of Pope, there were many minute points—some as to the meaning of passages; others as to their morality—on which they differed, as on the present occasion, and on which they spoke for hours on end.

"To return to the instance just now under notice: they

were thus engaged—that is, settling the moral bearing of the quotation above given—and so earnest in their employment, as to be totally oblivious of everything else—and, amongst the rest, Willie Craig and his horses—when Miss Darsy came running into the garden, just as her brother had begun a new section of his defence of Pope, with—

"'Pope, sir—I say Pope distinctly means ——'

"'Gracious heaven, Mr Darsy!' exclaimed Miss Sarah, 'are you at that odious Pope again? Have you forgotten that there has been a man with two horses waiting on you for this half-hour past? It is too bad—too bad, Mr Darsy.'

"'I acknowledge it, my dear—I acknowledge it,' replied the benevolent and good-natured Popite, smiling kindly on his sister; 'but I am sure the honest man will forgive me when I tell him the cause.'

"'Will he?' said his sister. 'I should rather think he will consider it an aggravation of the offence.'

"'There you are wrong, Sarah, my dear,' rejoined Mr Darsy; 'for the man understands these things.'

"'What!' exclaimed his sister, in alarm; 'does *he* quote Pope, too? Do horse-jockeys quote Pope?'

"'And why not, my dear?' said Mr Darsy, gladly seizing on this general query to avoid making any discoveries on the particular one. 'Why not, my dear? Why may not a horse-jockey understand and appreciate Pope as well as any other man? There is nothing to hinder him.'

"'Oh, certainly not,' replied Miss Darsy; 'but oh! if he was dosed with Pope as I am—if he had Pope! Pope! ringing in his ears night and day, in all situations and on all occasions, as I have—he would grow sick, sick, at the very name.'

"'Ah, Sarah, Sarah!' replied her brother, smiling—

'Believe me—good as well as ill—
Woman's at best ——

"'Pope again!' screamed Miss Darsy, putting her fin-

gers in her ears, and rushing distractedly away from her Pope-mad brother.

"The latter looked after her with a smile of pity, and perhaps a very slight matter of contempt mingled with it, and began again, and finished with additional emphasis, the quotation in which he had been interrupted. Then, turning to Sandy—

"'Let us go and take a look at this honest man's horses, Sandy,' he said. 'We have used him rather ill, after all; but I'll explain.'

"In the next minute the parties had met, and the first thing Mr Darsy did was to explain to Willie, as he had proposed to do, the reason of his absence.

"'A' richt, sir—a' richt,' replied Willie, graciously. 'There's far frae bein ony harm dune; and, besides, your excuse is a guid ane, although ye had been an hour langer.'

"Willie, at the special request of Sandy Ramsay, now proceeded to put his horses through their paces; and, while the former was at a little distance in the performance of this duty—'Is that the man you meant, Sandy?' said Mr Darsy.

"'I dinna ken him by sight, sir—only by repute,' replied Sandy; 'but, if he quotes Pope to you, he maun be the man, for he's a cunning scoundrel, and doubtless kens you're fond o' the little crooked poet.'

"'Sandy, Sandy, you have a scurrilous tongue,' said Mr Darsy. 'You'll find the man prove an honest one, I have no doubt, and will, I am sure, feel then ashamed of what you are now saying to his prejudice.'

"'Maybe, sir; but I'll be surer o' my man after I hae heard a quotation or twa, and still surer after ye hae bocht the horses; for if he doesna *do* ye, he's most assuredly no Willie Craig.'

"Here the conversation was interrupted by the return of the horse-dealer, who approached them, leading one of his

horses at a full trot. Both animals having been subjected to this display—

"'Now, my good friend,' said Mr Darsy, 'what's your price?'

"'Why, then, juist to be at a word wi' ye, sir,' replied Willie, taking off his hat with one hand, and scratching his head with the other, 'I'll take thirty guineas for the black ane, and twenty for the brown; and I'm sure that's a dead bargain—juist throwing the cattle awa. It's no a month since I was offered forty guineas in my loof for that black beast, but I wasna sae hard pressed for siller then as I'm noo, and I refused it.'

"'Sandy,' said Mr Darsy, turning to the farmer, 'what do you say to these prices? You have some knowledge of horses.'

"'I say, sir, that, as near as I can guess, they're juist aboot the dooble o' what they ocht to be. That black horse, if I'm no mista'en, is broken-winded, and 'll be dead lame in a week; and the brown ane's no a grain better.'

"Willie looked at Mr Darsy with a smile of conscious integrity, and of calm contempt at once of the slander and the judgment of the slanderer. The unsuspecting Mr Darsy returned the look, attributing Sandy's decision to prejudice.

"'Come now, Sandy,' said the farmer, 'forget that you have any interest to serve in this matter, and deal fairly between man and man.'

"'But it's no between man and man, sir,' said Sandy; 'it's between man and a horse-jockey; and it's weel kent that's no a fair match. It wad tak the deil himsel to deal wi' a horse-couper.'

"Willie smiled again the smile of conscious innocence; and, turning to Mr. Darsy, said—

"'I rather think ye will agree wi' me, sir, that

'Honour and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part'—

and he looked expressively at Sandy—

'*there* all the honour lies.'

"'Unquestionably,' replied Mr Darsy, 'it is

'Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow;
The rest is all but leather and prunello.'

"'Yes, sir,' said Willie—

'For modes of faith, let graceless zealots fight,
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.'

"'Certainly not—certainly not,' exclaimed Mr Darsy, in raptures.

'One self-approving hour whole years outweighs
Of stupid starers, and of loud hurrahs.'

"'Nae denyin't,' said Willie; 'and to a' wha doot it, I wad say—

Know, then, this truth (enough for man to know),
Virtue alone is happiness below.'

And, as he repeated the last line, he laid his hand with solemn emphasis on his heart.

"This last quotation did Willie's business.

"'Come, come,' said Mr Darsy, shedding tears of delight, and taking Willie by the arm to conduct him into the house, 'let us settle this small matter at once, and off hand. Just say at once, my friend, the lowest sum you really will take for these horses, and they are mine. Sandy there is a well-meaning man, but he has his prejudices, as we all have.'

"'Weel then, sir, juist to be at a word wi' ye,' replied Willie, 'I'll tak nine-and-twenty guineas for the black horse, and nineteen for the brown ane; and if that's no a bargain, I never gied or got ane in my life.'

"'They're no worth the half o't, I manteen,' exclaimed Sandy, energetically.

"'Hush, Sandy, hush, man,' said Mr Darsy. 'I'm sure the horses are a fair bargain. This honest man would never ask more than they are worth.'

"'Wadna he, feth?' said Sandy, with a satirical smile. 'Sir, I'm thinkin ye'll fin out that before ye're a week aulder. Wait ye till the horses hae been twa days in the plough, and ye'll see whether he has asked mair than the worth o' them or no. I wadna trust him farrer than I could throw a bull by the tail.'

"'Sandy, Sandy,' exclaimed Mr Darsy, in a deprecating tone, 'you have really a scandalous tongue. Have you forgot that beautiful verse in the universal prayer-

> 'Teach me to feel another's wo;
> To hide the fault I see;
> That mercy I to others show,
> That mercy show to me.'

"'That's a' very weel, sir; but I canna agree to hide the *cheat* I see—that's a different sort o' thing a'thegither.'

"'Sandy,' said Mr Darsy, in a still more angry tone, 'I really will hear no more of this.' And thus rebuked, Sandy said no more; he saw it would be useless.

"Leaving the latter in charge of the horses, Mr Darsy and Willie now went into the house; and there the latter received the price of his cattle, together with a comfortable refection, during which he and his host kept up a running fire of quotations from Pope.

"The former, as the reader will recollect, had cautioned the latter not to make any allusion to the author just named in the hearing of his sister; and this caution Willie observed. He took care to make no quotations while she was present; but he had not been put on his guard against her overhearing them, and the consequence was, that some of them were made in a tone so emphatically loud, that she did overhear them, even from the distance of an adjoining apartment. Perhaps few else than Miss Sarah could have discerned what were the words so spoken; but *her* ears were so sensitively alive to the language of the abhorred Pope, that she at once recognised them; and on doing so, immediately sent

for her brother to come and speak with her, for she had known him to have been repeatedly swindled by Pope-quoters before, some of whom had committed a scrap or two to memory for the express purpose.

"'James,' said Miss Sarah, on his coming into the apartment where she was, 'I hear that man quoting Pope. Now, James, I beg you'll be on your guard; for you may depend upon it he intends to cheat you. Recollect how often you have been taken in by Pope-quoters. There was the man that borrowed five pounds from you, on the strength of a quotation; there was the man that got your name to a fifty-pound bill, of which you had afterwards to pay every farthing, through precisely a similar claim on your bounty—for he had no other; then there was the fellow whom you recommended to the wood-merchants, and who forged a bill on his employers; then there were the silver spoons that you bought from the packman, and that turned out to be pewter and tin—all because they quoted Pope; then there was —— But it would take me a week to go over half the impositions of which you have been the victim, through that detested and detestable Pope.'

"To this tirade poor Mr Darsy listened with the utmost patience and meekness, while a smile of good-nature, blended with an expression of pity for his sister's blindness to the merits of the poet, played on his intelligent and benevolent countenance.

"'Well, Sarah, my dear,' he said, when his sister had done speaking, 'if I have been taken in by these people, as I am willing enough to allow I have, whether does the shame and disgrace lie with them or me?'

"'I do not know, James, where the shame and disgrace lie,' said his sister; 'but I have a pretty good guess, and so have you, where the loss does. But all that I have to say, just now, James, is—be on your guard in your dealings with this Pope-quoting horse-couper.'

"Mr Darsy was about to come out with a quotation in reply—he had a very apt one at his finger ends—but, recollecting that this would only further irritate his sister, he made a violent effort, and suppressed it, and merely said, with his usual benevolent smile, 'I'll take care, Sarah, my dear; I'll take care.' And, saying this, he left the apartment, and, rejoined Willie Craig, who soon after took his leave, with his money in his pocket, and a good dose of whisky punch under his belt.

"On leaving the house, Willie came accidentally across Sandy Ramsay, who was at the moment in the act of yoking the black horse to a cart.

"'Ye hae gotten a prime beast there, Sandy,' said Willie.

"'If we hae, I'm thinkin we hae paid as weel for him,' replied the latter dryly. 'I'm dootin ye hae saft-saped the master to some purpose. Ye hae come Pope owre him, as ither folks hae dune before ye.'

"Willie smiled significantly, clapped his finger to his nose, and walked on without vouchsafing any other reply.

"'What horse is that, Sandy?' said Mr Darsy on the forenoon of the second day after Willie Craig's visit, as the former approached the house, leading an old grey, lame beast by the halter

"'Do ye no ken him, sir?' replied Sandy, with an ominous smile.

"'No,' rejoined Mr Darsy, gravely.

"'Indeed, it's little wonder. This is Willie Craig's *black* horse, but your grey ane.'

"'What do you mean, Sandy?' said Mr Darsy, in a tone of alarm. 'You don't mean to say that that's my horse, my black horse?'

"'It's a' that's for him, sir?' replied Sandy. 'A shower o' rain's made a' the difference It has washed him into what ye see him—made him as grey as an auld rat. But his change o' colour's no the warst o't. See, he hasna a

leg to staun upon, and every teeth that was in his head's faun oot. There they are, every ane.' And Sandy pulled a handful of horse-teeth out of his pocket. 'I hurried him hame out o' the plough,' continued Sandy. 'before he wad fa' in pieces a'thegither, as I expected every moment he wad do.'

"Mr Darsy held up his hands in amazement at this most extraordinary metamorphosis of his famous black charger, and muttered an ejaculation of surprise at the very strange occurrence, but said nothing for a few seconds. Although he said nothing, however, he felt a good deal; not for the pecuniary loss it involved—for that he did not care—but for the credit of the admirers of Pope. His sister, too—what would she say to it? Here was another instance of imposition chargeable against his adored author, to add to the long list of which she was already in possession. It was an awkward affair. He would ten times rather that the price of the horse had been thrown into the sea; and this he would cheerfully have done, had the alternative been put in his power. But there was no help for it.

"'Sandy,' said Mr Darsy, after musing for a moment on the astounding deception which had just come to light, 'I'll tell you what it is, regarding this very strange affair. I think it very possible—nay, very likely—that the man Craig has been himself imposed upon with this horse, and that he knew nothing of its defects; for I cannot believe that so decent, intelligent, and well-informed a man as he is, could be guilty of such villany as this. I cannot believe it. Now, then, Sandy, I'll tell you what you'll do—you'll take the brown horse ——'

"'Wi, your leave, sir, I'll no do that, for yon beast's no chancy to come near, let alane to ride. He's the maist vicious brute I ever saw, and 'll neither hap, stap, nor win. I dinna think ye'll ever get ony guid o' him.'

"'God bless me!' exclaimed Mr Darsy, confounded at

this additional misfortune; 'he seemed quiet enough when brought here by Craig.'

"'Nae doot o't, he did,' replied Sandy; 'and heaven knows hoo the scoundrel managed it! But he's a very different thing noo, I can tell ye, sir.'

"'Dear me! that's really odd,' said Mr Darsy. 'Well, then, Sandy, I'll tell you what you'll do: you'll go to our good neighbour Mr Pentland, and get the loan of a pony from him, and ride over the length of Craig's—he lives, you know, at Longlane; it's only about nine miles distant—and tell him what has taken place; and I have no doubt he will at once refund the money, or, at any rate, give us other horses instead of those we have bought. He, indeed, said he would do the former, if we found anything wrong with them within a month.'

"Catch him there, sir, if ye can,' said Sandy. 'The deil a bodle o' the price he'll ever gi'e back. He's no sae saft in the horn as that. He wad promise ye, I ha'e nae doot—he promises the same thing to every ane he sells a horse to; but whar's the man ever got a penny back frae Willy Craig, for a' that? I would gie half-a-croon mysel to see him.'

"'Well, well, but do you just try him, Sandy,' said Mr Darsy; 'and I have no doubt you will find all turn out right, notwithstanding of appearances.'

"Thus summarily enjoined, Sandy obtained the loan of a pony, mounted, and set off for Longlane, to have an interview with Willie Craig on the subject of his master's purchase.

"Willie was standing at the door of his own house when Sandy approached; and, knowing well what he came about, would have retreated; but it was too late. He was seen; and, aware of this, he kept his ground manfully, and resolved to face out fearlessly the coming storm, as he had done many a one of a similar kind before. On Sandy's ap-

proach, Willie, thrusting his hands into his breeches-pockets, and bursting into a loud laugh, hailed his coming visiter with—

'Come, then, my friend! my genius! come along!'

"'Ay, I'll come along,' replied Sandy, angrily; 'and maybe to your cost.

"'Awake, my St John!' shouted Willie—

'Awake, my St John! leave all meaner things
To low ambition, and the pride of kings;
Let us (since life can little more supply),
Than just to look about us, and to die ——'

"'Come, come, Willie, nane o' yer blarney for me,' said Sandy, now dismounting. 'Ye're no gaun to saft-sane me that way. What kind o' horses were they ye selt us?'

"'Just the very pick o' the country,' replied Willie, coolly.

"'Ay, if ye mean the warst,' said Sandy. 'But to come to the point at ance—I'm sent here, Willie, by Mr Darsy—although I ken weel it's a fruitless errand—to tell ye that yer horses hae turned oot to be no worth their hides; that yer black ane has changed to a dirty grey wi' a shower o' rain, and is dead lame; and that the brown ane 'll neither work in plough nor cart.'

"'Dear me, Sandy, ye surprise me!' replied Willie, with a look of amazement as like the genuine as it was possible for any man to assume.

"'Maybe I do,' said Sandy; 'but I hardly believe it. However, this being the case, my master has sent me to say that he expects you'll refund him the siller, as ye promised, or find him ither twa horses worth the amount, in their stead.'

"'Whee-ee-ee-ou!' whistled Willie. 'Is that the next o't? Weel, I didna think your maister was sae unreasonable a man as that comes to, Sandy; but there's a heap o' queer folk in this world.'

"'My feth! there's that,' said the latter; 'and some o' them no far aff.'

"'As lang's *ye're* sae near, ye may say that, Sandy,' replied Willie; 'but to gie ye an answer to Mr Darsy, tell him, wi' my compliments, Sandy, that there's a truth among Pope's maxims that he doesna seem to hae fan oot. Tell him, wi' my best respects, that, in

> 'Spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
> One truth is clear, whatever is, is right.

Tell ye him *that*, Sandy, and I'm sure he'll be perfectly satisfied.'

"'Do ye no mean to refund the money, then?' inquired Sandy.

"'Deil a cowrie,' said Willie.

"'Nor to gie him ither horses in exchange?'

"'No a hoof.'

"'Weel, then, *ye* are an infernal scoundrel—that's a' I hae to say,' replied Sandy, remounting his pony, and starting off on his return home.

"On arriving at Dryfield, Sandy hastened to Mr Darsy's apartment, to inform him of the result of his mission, but, on opening the door, drew hastily back again, on finding a stranger in the room.

"'Come in—come in, Sandy,' said Mr Darsy, on observing the former retreating. 'This gentleman will excuse your intrusion; for he is a

> 'Friend to truth! of soul sincere,
> In action faithful, and in honour clear.'

"It might be so—of this we shall be better able to judge by and by; but the reader will think with us, we have little doubt, that this was saying rather too much of an acquaintance of half-an-hour; for no longer had the stranger been known to him by whom he was thus so highly complimented. Mr Darsy's visitor was, or at least represented himself to be, an itinerant preacher, who, aware, as he

said, of that gentleman's benevolence and hospitality, had taken the liberty of calling on him as he passed on his pious vocation. This account of himself and calling, he wound up with a very apt quotation from Pope; and, we need hardly add, that it was to this circumstance he was mainly indebted for the rapid progress he had made in Mr Darsy's affections.

"To return to our story:—On Mr Darsy's repeating the couplet above quoted, the stranger, who was a decent, quiet, elderly man, dressed in somewhat rusty blacks, smiled at the compliment, and looked graciously on Sandy, as if at once to assure him that he need be under no restraint on his account, and that he was, in truth, the worthy person which Mr Darsy had represented him to be. Thus encouraged, Sandy entered the apartment; and, at Mr Darsy's request, told the result of his mission. On hearing it, the worthy man merely shook his head, and said—

"'Well, well, Sandy, there's no help for it. We must just take better care next time.'

"He then explained to the stranger gentleman the nature of the transaction. The good man was horrified, held up his hands in amazement, and recited, with much feeling and solemnity—

> 'The good must merit God's peculiar care;
> But who but God can tell us who they are!'

"'Ah, who indeed?' said Mr Darsy, smiling. 'There is the difficulty.'

"'Ay, there, indeed, it is,' said the stranger, smiling in his turn. 'Who but God can tell the pure from the impure of heart? Who but he separate the tares from the wheat, the corn from the chaff? None else, indeed, my respected friend'—looking benevolently on Mr Darsy.

"'My dear sir,' replied the latter, emphatically, and taking his benevolent looking visiter by the hand, to mark his deep sense of the truths which he delivered—'my dear sir,'

he said, adding no more in words, but *looking* the remainder of the sentence, which, when translated, said—'you speak well and wisely.' After a moment—'My good sir!' exclaimed Mr Darsy, glancing at his visiter's shoes, which appeared much travel-soiled, 'I suspect you have had a long walk to-day. You seemed fatigued. Now, you will take a little of something or other—a glass or two of wine, or a little brandy, or something of that sort, till dinner is ready.'

"'You are too good—too good, my very excellent and much-respected friend,' replied the stranger; 'but,' he added, with a subdued yet significant look, 'there are other men of Ross than he whom Pope celebrated. There are others—

> 'Whose causeway parts the vale with shady rows,
> Whose seats the weary traveller repose.'

"This couplet, which was given in a mild and gentle tone, was so palpably directed to Mr Darsy, that he could not avoid seeing its intended application to himself; and, seeing this, he shook his head and smiled a disclaimer.

"'My good friend,' he said, 'I have but slender pretension to any portion of that noble character, so masterly drawn by the immortal bard of Twickenham; yet do I agree with what the poet elsewhere says, that

> 'All fame is foreign but of true desert—
> Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart—
> One self-approving hour whole years outweighs
> Of stupid starers and of loud hurrahs;
> And more true joy Marcellus, exiled, feels,
> Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.'

"The stranger smiled, bowed, and looked benevolently on his host.

"'Beautiful—beautiful!' he exclaimed, in a tone of rapture. 'How terse—how forcible! Yet, Mr Darsy, there are those—ay, there are those who say that Pope is no poet!'

"Mr Darsy smiled grimly.

"'I have heard,' he said, 'that there are such monsters in human shape; but I have never been so unfortunate as to meet with one of them. If I did, I do not know what I should do. I think I should murder the Goth off-hand. I believe I should. No human patience could stand against such heresy—such blasphemy, as I may call it.'

"Mr Darsy now rung the bell, and desired the servant to put some wine and brandy on the table. The order was immediately complied with, and the two Popites forthwith drew in.

"'Wine or brandy, my dear sir?' said Mr Darsy.

"'Why,' said the gentle stranger, who, by the way, had given in his name as Claythorn—'why,' he said, with a quiet, pleasant smile, 'I will take a little brandy, if you please. Wine doesn't agree with me. I find the alcohol safer.'

"'Then help yourself, my dear friend,' replied Mr Darsy; and Mr Darsy's friend did help himself, and that with a liberality which was rather surprising in one of his cloth; although it would not have surprised any one who had studied and drawn the proper conclusion from the appearance of his nose, which was of a bright, luminous red. Having finished his first jorum, Mr Darsy pressed his dear friend to another tifter; and his dear friend, nothing loth, did as he was desired; presenting satisfactory evidence, that a love of Pope and of brandy-and-water were perfectly compatible, doubt it who might. Opened up by the benign influence of the alcohol, the itinerant preacher now began to give Pope by the yard. Before, he had dealt him out sparingly—in bits and fragments: he now gave whole pages on end, to the inexpressible delight of his entertainer, who, having been induced, by the rarity of the occasion—the meeting with so enthusiastic an admirer of his beloved bard—to take a glass or two of wine extra, gave as ample measure in return.

"The conversation between the two Popites was thus reduced to nothing—only a word or two now and then; the rest was entirely made up of quotations. While Mr Darsy and his guest were thus employed, a servant came to announce that dinner was on the table. Both immediately rose to their feet. When they had done so, Mr Darsy took the preacher by the hand, and said, in an under tone—

"'Now, my dear good friend, when you go downstairs you will see my sister. She will dine with us. A good creature as ever lived—an excellent creature. But—but—I am ashamed to say it. The fact is, and you know it, my dear friend, that

'Good, as well as ill,
Woman's at best a contradiction still.'

My sister, in short, my dear friend, has no fancy for our adored bard. I can't account for it; but so it is. Therefore, if you will just be so good as say nothing about him while she is present, it will be as well. No quotations, you understand. We'll have our revenge for this restraint when she retires. We will resume the subject then, my dear sir,' added Mr Darsy, slapping his guest, in a friendly and jocose way, on the shoulder, as he spoke. 'We'll have a night of it; and I'll smuggle down *his* works from my library, and we will glance them over together when we've got the room to ourselves. That will be a treat, eh?'

"Thus cautioned as to his conduct in the presence of Mr Darsy's sister, Mr Claythorn descended to the dining-room with his host. Not a word—not the most distant allusion to Pope—escaped either of the two gentlemen; so that, whatever Miss Darsy's suspicions of the case might be—and she certainly looked as if she had some suspicions of it—nothing transpired to give her assurance of the fact. On her retiring, however, the pent-up sluices of the Popites were thrown open, and out there rushed two impetuous streams of poetry; sometimes blending, sometimes alternating, and sometimes

running counter to each other. Mr Darsy was delighted —more than delighted with his friend; for he had never, in the whole course of his life, met with one who could quote his favourite author with such facility and at such length, as the guest whom he was now entertaining; neither had he ever met with one who had so deep, so thorough a reverence for the mighty moral poet.

"This was altogether, in short, one of the happiest nights he had ever spent in his life. At its close, Mr Darsy accompanied his guest—who he insisted should remain with him all night—to his bedroom, and parted from him there with a very apt quotation, to which his friend replied with another no less felicitous, which he delivered in a very feeling and impressive manner. On the following morning—

"'What keeps your reverend friend, brother?' said Miss Darsy, somewhat sneeringly—for she had strong suspicions of the stranger's being a Popite—as she sat at the breakfast-table, waiting the appearance of that person, before proceeding to discharge the duties of the morning meal.

"'Really, my dear, I don't know,' replied Mr Darsy. 'The poor man is fatigued, I daresay; and we sat up rather late last night.'

"Ay, brother, I fancy you found him a very pleasant intelligent companion,' said Miss Darsy, with a look and tone of peculiar meaning.

"What this meaning was, Mr Darsy perfectly understood. He knew that his sister was at once insinuating her suspicions of the stranger's Popism, and driving at a discovery of the fact. Aware of this, and by no means desirous of coming to an explanation on the subject, Mr Darsy, without noticing his sister's remark, said he would 'just step up-stairs to see what was keeping Mr Claythorn,' and deliver himself (but of this he said nothing) of a happy quotation which had occurred to him, and which he thought would form an exceedingly appropriate greeting.

"He entered his friend's bedroom; there was no movement. He drew aside the curtains; the bed was unoccupied. The Pope-quoter had decamped. He was off; and off, too, were a dozen silver spoons and a small gold watch; all of which property had been unguardedly left in the room in which he slept."

Here ended my good host's (Mr Pentland) anecdotes and sketch of the worthy proprietor of Dryfield; but, he added, he could give as much more of the same kind, if I chose, as would fill half-a-dozen volumes. I thanked him, and said that I would rest content with what he had been kind enough to give me, in the meantime; but that, if the readers of the "Border Tales"—for which, I told him, I intended these memorabilia—desired any more, I should, perhaps, take the liberty of applying to him again.

THE SURGEON'S TALES.

THE CHERRY-STONE.

I HAVE always been anxious to avoid giving publicity to details of my profession which might harrow the feelings of mankind—than which, I believe, nothing is more easy of accomplishment by those who are, as I am, in the daily exercise of painful operations on the human body. Pain has been gifted to man as an inheritance; so ample, in so many forms and complexions, in so many directions, that we have only to think, and we feel it—we have only to look, and we see it—we have only to speak or act, and we rouse it. Yet so wonderfully are we constituted, that we do not hate it more than we *love* it; while we are all engaged in the general endeavours to banish it and conceal it, we have such a craving appetite for it, in the second-hand form of narrative, that we gloat over pictures of suffering with the feelings of an epicure, and seek and call for the stimulus of sighs, and groans, and tears, with an avidity only equalled by our desire of personal happiness. A final cause might be traced in this extraordinary feature of the human mind, if we were curious to know the ways of the Almighty, the modes he has had recourse to, to fit us for life, and prepare us for death; but this is not my object, nor, while I continue to draw pictures from life—charged with a moral that may instruct, truth that may edify, or results that may show there is good in evil, and wonderful deliverances from apparently irremediable wo—is it my desire to minister to the mysterious appetite for sorrow, according to its wants, or the abilities which a long experience might enable me to exercise with greater effect than many sensitive minds might approve.

Some time ago, I had been on a visit to a neighbouring town, where I had been called to give my professional advice to a patient who had more faith to place in me than in his neighbouring practitioners. I was returning in the stage-coach, along with a number of other passengers, when my attention was directed to a poor woman sitting by me, with a young girl in her lap, apparently in great distress. The face of the invalid, who appeared to be about twelve years of age, was covered by a white napkin, which her mother, with a careful hand, lifted from time to time, to see how her daughter (for such she turned out to be) was affected by the motion of the vehicle. Two or three people around, from the same town, and who seemed to know the history of the pair, evinced a greater degree of anxiety and curiosity about the state of the poor girl than might have been expected from an ordinary case of illness. They spoke to each other in a low tone; and I could hear my own name mentioned in such a manner as indicated plainly that they did not know me. Though I had not been a professional man, and had not had my curiosity roused by the mention of my name, I could not have refrained from inquiring into the state of the little victim of so much disease, and the object of so much solicitude. Turning round, I asked the mother if she would allow me to remove the napkin, and look at her whose face it covered. She assented with a ready, anticipative willingness; and I lifted softly the white covering. The sight was extraordinary, even to me, who was in the habit of daily seeing strange faces, strangely marked by the powers of the fell fiends that feed on the lacerated feelings of pain-stricken mortals. The girl, though twelve years of age, was reduced to the size and weight of a child of half her little period of life. Her face was as white as the snow-coloured covering which shaded it; her eyelids were closed, as if she were in a deep slumber; her lips, wide apart, were as white as her cheek; and, notwith-

standing of the change in all the natural lineaments of her countenance, there was such a regularity, or rather beauty of outline, lying in the calmness and composure of what one of fancy might conceive of a sleeping sylph, that I felt my sympathies more strongly roused by what may be termed the poetical accidents of the patient, than could have been effected by the mere aspect of a cruel disease.

As I sat looking at the face of the half-lifeless being, and musing a little on the supposed nature of her complaint, previously to an inquiry at her mother for the particulars of her case, I saw rise, on a sudden, and as if by the power of some heart-born impulse, a feeling throughout all the fine, attenuated muscles, that changed the angelic quietness of her countenance into the shrinking and contorted motions of a pain that seemed to bring despair on its wings, as a colleague to strike as soon as its own pang was inflicted. I could see, also, that there was mixed with the expression of pain an indication of terror, as if the poor victim apprehended some onset of the enemy that had already laid her so low, similar to what she had been already in the habit of experiencing. In an instant it came: the whole chest, throat, and face were grasped by a convulsive spasm, and a cough, shrill and piercing, as if the breath passed with difficulty through the windpipe, accompanied by the long drawback of apparent croop, that sounded like the yell of a strangling dog, struck our ears, and produced a feeling of consternation among those who were as yet better acquainted with her extraordinary case than I was. I had never experienced anything of the same kind; for the symptoms that separated her complaint, whatever it was, from the most painful diseases of the windpipe known to us, were at first sight apparent. The sound prevented me from getting intelligence from her mother, who was, besides, under such alarm and anxiety, that she paid little attention to those around her. The rattling of the

coach was a great aggravation of the attack; and the noise of a grating wheel, not unlike that wrung from the poor victim, mixed with it, and rendered the scene frightful. After lasting about ten minutes, the harrowing symptoms stopped suddenly; in a few minutes, I saw again before me the same placid countenance, with the closed eyelids, and the same lifeless appearance I had witnessed before the attack came on.

I now got an account from the mother of the cause of her daughter's distress. About two months previously, the girl had been eating cherries; and one of the stones having been involuntarily thrown back into her throat, she had endeavoured to prevent the operation of swallowing it, from a fear that it would injure her, and thus produced an irregular action among the muscles of deglutition, which precipitated the hard substance into the windpipe. The first effects of this accident were grievous in the extreme; for the sensibility of that exquisitely tender part of the body roused the muscles to efforts of expectoration, and brought on fits of the most intense coughing, which lasted until the strength of the body having failed, the irritability of the passage died, through the pure inanition of the exhausted system. Every energy prostrated, she would be for a time quiet, until the *pabulum* of the irritability was again supplied by the mysterious operation of nature, when the same painful spasms of the muscles were renewed, with another long fit of coughing—every re-drawn breath forcing its way with a shrill sound, and suggesting the fear that she was every moment on the eve of being choked. This was again succeeded by a calm, to be followed by a similar exacerbation; and thus was her life reduced to an alternation of agony and rest without peace; and all the time the reductive process of famine (for she could scarcely swallow a morsel without the greatest pain) went on, till she was reduced to a perfect skeleton. Having been the pride of

her parents, as well from her beauty as her amiable mind and manners, she was watched night and day with a solicitude scarcely less painful than her own dreadful condition; and, as both the doctors of the small town seemed irresolute as to the course to be pursued, the victim was left lying on her back, and suffering those violent and incessant attacks, for the period of six weeks, without any effectual effort being made for her relief. At last, however, the urgent natue of the case, which interested almost all the inhabitants of the place, forced the medical men to try, at last, the only evident operation that could be of any service; and an incision was made into the windpipe, with a view to get hold of the stone. Whether it was that they had calculated on wrong data, in regard to the locality of the peccant and cruel intruder, or whether the operation was otherwise unskilfully performed, I know not; but the result was, that, after putting her to so intolerable pain, they were obliged to sew up the opening they had made, and again resign her to her miserable fate. Many of the neighbours got angry at this issue, and blamed the surgeons; but no one would lend a helping hand to pay the expense of bringing a more successful operator to the spot; so that all was vain reproof, with still the same fate to the interesting sufferer. At last, the mother, who could stand no longer the appalling sight of her daughter suffering worse than a thousand deaths, while a remedy on earth could be found, had come to the resolution of travelling by the coach to the residence of one who might, by an extensive experience, be supposed to be able to yield relief; and, having got a letter of introduction to Dr —— (myself), she was thus far on her way to my residence.

I heard the poor woman's story; and, when I took the letter from her, and told her that I was the individual she was travelling to, I could discover that her face was on the instant lighted up with hope; even the poor sufferer on her

knee lifted up her eyelids, and fixed her clear blue eyes on my face with a piteous supplication that I shall never forget. I told the mother that she should have come to me long before; but that she was not yet too late—for that I had strong hopes of being able to extricate the stone, and restore her child to health. My words fell on the ear of the patient; and I could see by the tear in her eye—the only indication she could give of her gratitude—for she was under a continual terror of moving a single muscle of her face—that she understood perfectly what I said. The passengers seemed to be as much moved as those more nearly interested, and turned their eyes on me as if I had been one gifted beyond ordinary mortals with the means of benefiting mankind. We got forward, luckily, without another attack of the ruthless foe that haunted the innocent victim with such unremitting hatred; and, on our arrival at our place of destination, I made arrangements for the mother and daughter being lodged in a friend's house not far from my own, that my patient might be as much as possible under my eye, until I deemed it a proper time (for she required strength) to perform the operation which I meditated.

I considered well what I had to do, and had no doubt of my success; but I was met by some untoward disadvantages. I found that there was no possiblity of imparting to her strength—the incessant reductive workings of her spasms counteracting all my energies in this direction, and compelling me to a speedy application of my means of salvation. The prior wound had not been sufficiently cured, and the pain she had suffered under the mangling hands of her first tormentors left such a vivid impression on the tortured mind of the sufferer, that, anxious as she was to get the stone extracted, and to breathe again freely the air of heaven, she shuddered at the thought of being subjected to the knife of the operator. I used every seductive artifice to soothe her fears; I showed her the small instrument with

which I would give her peace and health, and painted to her fancy the happiness she would again enjoy in romping among the green fields as in former days, freed from the terror of the slightest motion that now enslaved her. She lay and heard me, opened her eyes, sighed, and shut them again with a slight shake of her head, and a shudder, as if all arguments had failed; then, as I rose, threw after me a look of supplication, as if she wished me to try again to bring her to the point of resolution to free herself from the dreaded enemy that held her so firmly and securely in his grasp. She little knew that she was utterly powerless to resist—a child might have held her hands, while the operation was performed, against her will; but I wished to avoid compulsion; though I feared that, if she would not consent, I would be necessitated, from the gradual decay of the little remaining strength she had, to save her quickly, against her own fears of the means of her salvation.

In the afternoon of the same day I had appointed to perform the operation against her will, her mother came to me and said that the invalid had made signs to her that she would now submit herself to my power. I lost no time in getting my assistants, and waiting upon her before the resolution should depart; but, what was my disappointment to find that she had, in the meantime, been seized with an attack of coughing, so much more serious than any she yet had, that I expected every moment to see her die of suffocation. Her mother sat beside her, weeping and looking on her with an expression of agony; and the little sufferer presented to me such an appearance of emaciation and weakness, that I doubted if I could venture to touch her with a knife, even if her relentless foe allowed her once more to escape for a little time. The coughing and spasms again ceased; but she lay as one dead. I could scarcely feel a pulse in her, and her pale, beautiful face was as calm and benign as if she had been soothed by a divine aspiration in

place of being tortured the moment before by an agony that twisted every muscle of her countenance. She lay in this state about ten minutes, at the end of which time she again opened her eyes, and made a faint sign to her mother that she was prepared. I lost no time. In a moment I had made the incision; and so well had I calculated the locality of the stone, that I was able to seize it on the very first insertion of the nippers. I drew it out, and held it up to her eye. The sight of it operated like magic. She started up on her feet, and, running a few paces, while the blood flowed plentifully down her white throat, clapped her hands, and cried, "It's out—it's out!" She would have fallen instantly; for the impulse that had overcome her weakness was like a shock from a galvanic battery, that moves, and in an instant leaves all dead as before. I seized her, just as she was falling; and, having placed her again on the sofa, sewed up the wound. Before I left her, I saw her breathing freely the unobstructed air. Her blue eye was illuminated with joy; and such was the immediate effect of giving a free passage to the breath of life, that one might have marked the rapid change of returning health going on throughout her whole system. In a short time she recovered, and returned home.

I saw this interesting patient three years afterwards—a fine, blooming young woman.

THE HENWIFE.

I have often made observations on that extraordinary disease, hypochondria; and chiefly on the cases where it presents the phasis of a false conception of the existing condition of external circumstances affecting the patient, accompanied by a terror of their operation on his fortunes and prosperity. These are common. I conceive that they argue a lesser derangement of the cerebral functions, than where there occurs a total overturn of the conception of

personal identity; and the conviction of *self* passes into a belief that the patient is actually something else than himself—nay, something else than a man at all, and even something else than an organised being. In both cases, there is, of course, a false conviction, and so far they range under the same head; yet, as the conception of identity is among the first, and strongest, and steadiest of all the states or acts of the mind, it may be presumed to require a stronger deranging impulse to effect the overthrow of an idea that often remains unimpaired amidst the very wrecks of the intellect, than to produce those conditions of ordinary partial derangement of the rational or perceptive powers which daily come under our observation. Yet—and it is a curious feature of these pitiful states of the diseased mind, and one that argues ill for the superiority of man over the passing humours of a fluctuating temperament—wherever there is a false conception of identity, passing into an idea that the patient is something different from himself, he becomes an involuntary humorist; and, while the ordinary maniac brings tears to the eyes of the shuddering beholders, he, in his character of an animal or piece of inert matter, produces nothing but a tickling sensation of exquisite ludicrousness, passing often into broad laughter, certainly the greatest enemy of pity. Now, I approach a case of this kind with feelings entirely different; and, while I thus confess that I can contemplate no state of derangement but with pity, I shall leave a grave narrative of an extraordinary instance of false conviction—true in all its details*—to be read and relished according to the fancies and humours of the public.

In a large old land of houses in —— Street, commonly known by the name of the Ark, and occupied by a number of small families in the lower grade of society, an old

* We understand that another case of human incubation occurred, somewhere about the Crosscauseway or Simon Square, of Edinburgh, in Dr Gregory's time.—Ed.

woman, Margaret B—, had lived for many years, chiefly upon the bounty of a noble family in the country, whom she had served in the capacity of poulterer—*vulgariter*, henwife. She had been for some time ailing; and I was requested by those who took an interest in her, to pay her occasionally a visit, in the course of my professional rounds in the neighbourhood of her dwelling. I could discover, for a time, no marked complaint about her. Living lonely, she had fallen into a lowness of spirits, which, as one of her neighbours informed me, was most effectually removed or ameliorated for a time, by a recurrence to the remembered employments of her former years. She was, in particular, curiously addicted to thinking and speaking of her former extensive establishment of fowls at —House; and made reference to speckled favourites by special name, as if she had treated them by distiuctions of superiority, beauty, and utility, after the manner of fond mothers, who indulge a habit of fantastic favouritism among their children. I myself noticed this garrulous peculiarity; but, accustomed to all manner of eccentricities, as well healthy as morbid, I attributed her freaks to a foolish fancy, that sought for food among the cherished recesses of a fond memory of the past. By degrees, however, she underwent a considerable change; falling into moods of silent melancholy, which lasted for days, and rising from them to luxuriate, with a fervour that engrossed her whole soul, on the favourite theme, which seemed to present every day new attractions for her moody mind.

As I passed one day along the passage that led to her humble dwelling, her nearest neighbour, a favourite gossip, met me, and whispered, secretly and mysteriously, into my ear, that old Margaret, as she called her, had been, during the whole day, occupied with the regulation of an imagined establishment of her old favourites, the hens. She had been calling them to her by name; using all the technica-

lities of the domestic fowler's vocabulary; driving some of the more forward away, and endearingly encouraging the backward favourites to participate in the meal of scattered barley she threw upon the floor. The woman added, that she feared she was mad, and yet she laughed at the symptoms of her imputed insanity. I went forward, and, on opening the door, saw good evidence of the truth of my informant's story in the grain that lay about in every direction; but the occupation was gone, the industrious fowler had sunk into a fit of melancholy, and sat, with a drooping head and heavy eye, looking into the fire. She was dogged and silent; and, though I touched gently the irritable chord, I got no response: the illusion was gone, and had left nothing in her mind but the darkness of a morbid melancholy which I possessed no secret to remove.

This state of gloom lasted, I understood—for I could not get her visited in the meantime—for three days, during which she scarcely spoke to her neighbours, whose curiosity, roused by her previous conduct, supplied the place of the kindness which ought to have stimulated charitable attentions. At the end of that time, she awoke from her dream, and spoke with her accustomed sense on any subject that was started in her presence; but during the night she was heard again busy in her old occupation of feeding her feathered family; and several of the neighbours had even been at the pains to leave their beds, and listen to her one-sided dialogue and strange proceedings, as a matter of intense curiosity. I got a second report of these acts from the same neighbours, and very properly set the patient down for one of those unfortunate beings, too common in our land, who are afflicted with temporary derangement, which sometimes shows itself in the form of a fancied presence of some familiar object, and a passing into a condition or position occupied in some prior part of the life of the afflicted individual. These objects are too common to

excite in us any particular curiosity; and, having made a report to those interested in her that I feared she was subject to temporary fits of insanity, I left to them the choice of the ordinary expedients in such cases.

Some weeks afterwards, the neighbour whom I had formerly seen, called and told me that the patient had not been attended to as her situation required, and that she had passed into a new condition, so extraordinary and incredible, that she could not trust her tongue to tell it to a rational being, and therefore urged me to come and witness for the truth of what no mortal would otherwise believe, by the evidence of my eyes. I asked her to explain what she meant; but she replied by a laugh, and went away, stating, that, unless I visited her soon, I might lose one of the most strange sights I had ever witnessed in the course of all my extended and long practice. I had seen so much of the wild vagaries of distempered minds, so many metamorphoses of fancied identities, and such extraordinary instances of imaginary metempsychoses, and other freaks in lunatics, that I felt no more curiosity on the subject of the woman's excited report than I do in ordinary cases; but, in about an hour afterwards, I found leisure to call and make a proper judgment of what might, after all, be a matter exaggerated by the clouds of ignorance.

As I proceeded up the stair, and along the passage, I observed several heads peeping out at me, and heard titters and whispers in all directions, as if the neighbours were all a-tiptoe with curiosity to enjoy the doctor's surprise at what he was to behold. The woman who had called me came running out from the middle of three or four old gossips like herself, and, holding away her head to conceal a suppressed laugh, perhaps mixed with a little affected shame, led the way before me to the patient's room. I was grave all the while, as becomes my profession; and I was besides displeased, as I ever am, when I see the misfortunes

of my fellow-creatures made the subject of ill-timed mirth, merely because the most dreadful of all the visitations of man puts on grotesque appearances and ludicrous impersonations of fantastic characters.

When I entered, I observed no one in the room. The patient's seat by the fire was empty. A strange noise met my ear—"Cluck, cluck, cluck!" which the woman requested me to pause and listen to. It seemed to me a human imitation of the sounds of the feathered mother of a young brood in our barn-yards. I was astonished, and felt my curiosity rise as high as my conductress might desire. She proceeded to a dark corner of the room, where I saw a large tub half-filled with straw, with the poor victim sitting in it, in such a position that her head and shoulders only could be observed. I now ascertained that the strange sounds came from the occupant of the old seat of Diogenes; yet still my understanding was at fault. I stood and gazed at the spectacle before me, while my conductress seemed to enjoy my perplexity, and I heard the repressed laughter of those in the passage who had come near enough to listen to our proceedings.

"That is a strange seat, Margaret," said I. "What means this?"

I was answered by a repetition of the same extraordinary sounds—"Cluck, cluck, cluck!"

I looked gravely at the neighbour for a serious explanation. I could see no humour in the melancholy indications of drivelling madness, and added a stern expression to the gravity with which I intended to subdue a cruel and ill-timed levity. The woman felt awed and abashed, but it was only for a moment; she stooped down, and, putting her hands among the straw upon which the invalid sat, pulled out a couple of eggs. A louder repetition of the sounds, "cluck, cluck," followed, as if the incubator felt an instinctive parental anger at the temerity of the spoiler of her in-

choate progeny. To satisfy her humour, the woman replaced the eggs, and the cluck ceased.*

"There are two dozen of these beneath her" said the woman. "Lord ——'s gamekeeper brought them in to her four days ago, to serve for food to her. I saw her go out for the straw, and she borrowed the tub from me. She built her nest on the night afterwards, and she commenced sitting there immediately when it was completed, so that she has already sat three days and nights. We heard the 'cluck' through the partition; and, upon coming in, found her as you now see her."

"Has she got any food?" said I, with a still graver aspect, as I saw my informant watching for a smile to repay her for her extraordinary information, and keep her in countenance.

"Nothing but some peas of barley," replied the woman, with something of seriousness assumed with great difficulty. "See here."

And she pointed to a small cup placed by the side of the tub, in which some of the grain mentioned was contained, and alongside of it a small vessel of water.

The truth was now fully apparent. A false conviction of as extraordinary a nature as I had yet witnessed had taken entire possession of the invalid's mind. It was not difficult, on ordinary and vulgar data, to account for the peculiar turn of the malady in the case of this woman, because all her life had been spent among fowls; yet I must bear my professional testimony to the fact, that, among the many instances of false conceptions of identity I had previously witnessed, and have since seen, I never knew a case where

* The reader may be here reminded of the well-known case of the confessor to the French King. He was long under the delusion of being a cock; he tried to fly, perched upon cross rafters, picked minced meat out of a wooden trencher, and crowed regularly every morning. —Ed.

the peculiarity of the conviction had any relation whatever to the prior habits of mind or body of the invalid. The deranging power, whatever it is, has often no respect to pre-existing habits or associations; but, on the contrary, seems to delight in a capricious triumph over all the ordinary acts of the mind, and delights to introduce an imagined form and character as widely opposed as the antipodes to the prior conceptions of the unfortunate individual. The case before me was, therefore, in this respect interesting; for, as to the grotesque conditions of the fancied change, though calculated to produce an extraordinary effect on vulgar minds, I looked upon them, philosophically, as only another instance of the endless variety of melancholy changes to which our frail natures are exposed.

I proceeded to ask my informant if any means had been taken to draw the invalid from her position, and got for answer, that several of the neighbours had come in and endeavoured to prevail upon her to renounce her charge; but that, having failed in their efforts, they had on several occasions removed her by force, and in opposition to strenuous struggles, and extraordinary sounds of mixed anger and pitiful sorrow. No sooner, however, were their backs turned, than she *flew* to her seat, and manifested the greatest satisfaction by peculiar noises, at being again reinstated in her charge of her inchoate brood, which she was terrified would, by growing cold, be deprived of the principle of vitality she was busy in communicating to them. I tested, by my own efforts, her instinctive force of affection, by taking her by the arms and endeavouring to remove her; but she sent up such a pitiful cry, mixed with her imitative cluck and cackle, that I let her go, as much through a sudden impulse of fear as from an inability to lift her by the power of my arms. I then put down my hand to remove some of the eggs, but was in an instant attacked as fiercely as if the invalid had in reality been the creature she fancied herself to be; and

the manner of the attack was so true to the habits of the feathered mother, that, even in the midst of my philosophy and concern for the unhappy being, I trembled for my professional gravity. She had fancied that the protuberance on her face was a beak, and used that organ with such effect, that, on missing my hand, she darted the fancied organ of defence on the corner of the tub, and produced a stream of blood, which I required to quench by the vulgar but effectual mode of placing down her back the key of the door. During all the struggle, the "cluck, cluck" was kept up, accompanied with a shaking of her clothes, as if she had been raising the feathers to evidence farther for her instinctive anger.

I now left this unhappy individual to the charge of the woman, with a recommendation (I could do nothing more) to endeavour to get her weaned from her situation and habit. Two or three of my brother practitioners having heard the circumstances, visited her during that afternoon, and witnessed, as they informed me, the same symptoms that had been seen by me. Two days afterwards, I visited her again, having, in the meantime, written to Lord ——'s steward an account of the state of the family's poor *protegé*, with some advices as to how she ought to be disposed of. I found her still in the same position, and if possible more determined to defend her brittle charge. I expressed to the attendant some surprise that a human being should have been allowed to remain so long in a predicament which seemed to throw some discredit upon our vindicated superiority over the lower animals; but she answered me by stating that the patient had become so fierce and vindictive, when an attempt was made to remove her from the tub, or to take the eggs from under her, that every one was afraid to go near her. A prejudice had, moreover, taken possession of the neighbours, that she was under the power of some evil spirit; and those who ventured to look at her, as she

sat clucking over her charge, gratified their intense curiosity by putting their heads in at the door. As I approached her, I saw plainly that a fiercer spirit had taken possession of her, probably from the attempts that had been made to displace her, and overcome her extraordinary instinct. Her eyes glanced as if fired by the impulse of strong anger, and her "cluck" sounded with a wilder and more unearthly sound than when I saw her before; but she spoke not a word, and, indeed, since ever she had betaken herself to the nest, she had been heard to utter no other sounds than those that are peculiar to the bird she personated. These symptoms imparted to her a most impressive and terrific aspect, altogether incompatible with any feeling of the ludicrous. I have seen mad people in every mood; and, although I have observed them assume attitudes and looks more suggestive, of course, of the terror of personal injury, I am quite free to confess, that I never saw any one whose appearance was so productive of those indefinable feelings of pity, fear, and awe, so often roused within the walls of an asylum. Nature was not only changed—it was overturned; human feelings represented the instincts of the brutes that perish; and the organs, motions, and attitudes of our species, were made to subserve, with an intense anxiety that was painful to behold, the impulses of creatures in the lowest grade of creation. I confess that my feelings were, on this occasion, harrowed; and, if I were to search for any feature in the spectacle before me, more than another, that tended to produce in me this effect, I would say that it was the hideous intensity of the instinctive anxiety that beamed in her dull sullen eye, as I proceeded forward to the place where she covered and defended her charge, aided by the horrid interminable cluck that ground my ears with its unnatural sound.

I was obliged to leave her again, still in the same predicament; for the woman declared that she, for her part, would not again meddle with her, unless assisted by her

neighbours; and they, possessed of the terror of the evil spirit, would not approach her. I got her, however, to promise to give her some meat; but this, she said, was of no easy accomplishment, for the invalid was possessed of the idea that nothing ought to be eaten by one in her "particular situation," but what a hen might pick up in its bill and swallow. She had discarded broth and butcher-meat; and the few crumbs she had picked up off a platter that had been placed before her would not suffice to keep in her life.

That same evening, an extraordinary scene took place in the house of this demented creature. I had not been informed that she had any near relations; but it happened that, when she was still in the same extraordinary position, an only son, a fine open-hearted fellow, a sailor, who had been absent from her for seven years, arrived, buoyant with hope, and fired with desire to see his mother happy and well. Good heavens! what a sight was presented to him! I witnessed not the harrowing meeting; but the old neighbour was present, and attempted an inadequate description of it to me. She did not know her son; and when he approached her, to greet her with a son's love, she exhibited the same symptoms of fury, and clucked the dreadful sounds of her defensive anger in his agonised ear. What he saw, and what he heard, opened up to him the hideous mystery. He rushed out of the house, and had not again returned.

Next day, the butler of the family who took charge of her called on me. I accompanied him to the house, when one or two of the neighbours were prevailed upon to lend their assistance in getting her removed by force. The scene that followed was an extraordinary one. She resisted them to the last; as the struggle increased, her eye became more fiery, and her unearthly screams more loud and discordant —passing through all the notes of an incensed hen-mother, and attaining, at times, to the harsh scream which one may have heard from that feathered biped, when separated from

her brood, and pursued by a band of urchins. The task of mere removal was not a difficult one, and was soon accomplished. Some curious observer examined the eggs, and found that not one of them was broken, so carefully had she performed her supposed duty of incubation. If she had sat the requisite time, there is not a doubt they would have been duly and legitimately hatched.

Such are the details of this extraordinary case. It is needless to say that it may transcend human belief. That is nothing, because belief is too much regulated by experience. I waited on the poor woman afterwards. The idea haunted her for about two months, and then gave place to some other wild conceptions, that in their turn gave way to others of a more rational character. Her son returned, and saw, with pleasure, the change that had taken place upon his parent. Latterly she became perfectly rational; but, if any one alluded in the remotest degree to her position in the tub, she shuddered with horror, and evaded the subject, as if it had terrors too dreadful to be borne.

THE ARTIST.

In the course of my practice, I have paid some attention to the effects of the two great stimulants, whisky and tobacco, on the bodies and habits of the votaries of excitement. There is a great difference in the action of the two substances; and I know no more curious subject for the investigation of the metaphysical physician, than the analysis of the various effects upon the mind produced by all the stimulating narcotics which are used by man, for the purpose of yielding pleasure or mitigating pain. I have myself committed to paper some thoughts upon this subject, which may yet see the light; and many of the conclusions I have deduced from my reasoning and experience, may be found to be curious, as well as instructive. I have found, for in-

stance, that people of sanguine temperaments are greater drinkers than smokers; and those of a dull, phlegmatic cast are greater smokers than drinkers. A man that smokes will almost always drink; but a man that drinks will not always, nor indeed often, smoke. The two habits are often found combined in the same individual; but it is, notwithstanding, a fact, that, if the smoker and drinker could always command the spirit, he would very seldom or ever trouble himself with the other. I am led into these remarks by a case that occurred in my practice not very long ago, where the two habits joined in an extraordinary manner their baneful influences in closing the mortal career of one of those unfortunate votaries.

I was first called to William G——, a very ingenious artist, when he lay under a severe attack of what we call *delirium tremens*, or temporary insanity, produced by, or consisting of (for the proximate cause is often the disease itself), highly irritated nerves, the consequence of a succession of drinking fits. I found that he had been "on the ball," as they say, for three weeks, during which time he had drunk forty-two bottles of strong whisky. Like many other people of genius, whose fits of inspiration (for artists have those fits as well as poets) make them work to excess, and leave them, as they wear out, the victims of ennui and lassitude, he was in the habit of applying himself to his business with too much assiduity, for the period, generally, of about a month. Exhausted by the excitement of thought and invention kept up too long, he fell regularly down into a state of dull lethargy, which seemed to be painful to him. He felt as if there was a load upon his brain. A sense of duty stung him, after a few days' idleness, poignantly; and, while he writhed under the sting of the sharp monitor, he felt that *he could not* obey the behest of the good angel; and yet could not explain the reason of his utter powerlessness and incapacity for work. If he had allowed this state,

which is quite natural, and not difficult of explanation, to remain unalleviated by stimulants for a day or two, he would have found that, as the brain again collected energy, he would have been relieved by the *vis medicatrix* of nature herself; but he had no patience for that; and drink was, accordingly, his refuge and relief. The first glass he took was fraught with the most direful power—it threw down the floodgates of a struggling resolution; the relief of the new and artificial impulse raised his spirits: another application inflamed his mind; and then bottle after bottle was thrown into the furnace, until the drink-fever laid him up, and brought upon him the salutary nausea which overcame the rebellious desire. This system had continued for more than ten years. He had been gradually getting worse and worse; and, latterly, he had resigned himself to the cognate influence of the narcotic weed.

When I got an account of this young man—for he was still comparatively young—and saw some of the exquisite pieces of workmanship, both in sculpture and painting, he had executed, I felt a strong interest in his fate. He was, indeed, one example out of many, where I had contemplated, with tears that subdued my professional apathy, genius, commonly supposed to be the rarest, if not the highest gift of mortals, working out, by some power inherent in itself, the ruin of the body, mind, and morals of its possessor. This victim I saw lying under the fell power of one of the most frightful of diseases, brought on by his own intemperance; and not far from his bed lay a half-finished Scripture-piece—a work which, if finished, would have brought him money and fame. He presented the ordinary appearances of his complaint. Emaciated and pale, he laboured under that union of ague and temporary madness which *delirium tremens* exhibits. All the motions of his nerves seemed to have been inverted; those servants of the will had got a new master, which kept them, by his diabolical

power, in continual action. His arms were continually in motion, aiming at some object present or ideal; but, instead of making direct for it, vibrating in sudden snatches backward and forward; his legs were also in continual agitation, kicking up the bedclothes, then being stretched forth, as if held by a spasm; and his eyes, red and fiery, seemed to fly from object to object, as if the vision of a thing burned the orbs, and made them roll about for a resting-place. Thousands of *muscæ volitantes,* or the imaginary flies that swarm round the heads of victims of this complaint, tormented him by their ideal presence, and kept his snatching, quivering hands in continual play, till, by seizing the bedposts, he seemed, though only for a moment, to get a relief from his restlessness. He knew no one; and sudden burning thoughts flashing upon his heated brain, wrung from him jabbering exclamations, containing intensive words of agony or mirth. The rest of his convulsed muscles was only purchased at the expense of such a morbid increase of the sense of hearing, that the scratch of a pin on the wall pained him as much as if the operation had been performed on his brain—a symptom often so strongly marked in regular brain-fever, and often detected in this last stage of the drunkard's disease. The sense of the pupil of the eye was of the same morbid character. A stream of light produced in him a scream, suggesting the analogy of the sound of the night-bird, the owl, when light is suddenly let into a nest among the young brood. The delights of life, sunbeam and sound, were transformed into poisons; so that his own vivid pictures, or the most melodious of songs, would have produced a convulsive spasm. Food was nauseous to him, and water swallowed by gulps, in the intervals of spasms, was all that could be taken without pain, to quench the burning fires within.

Such is a faithful picture of a disease produced by ardent spirits. I recommend it to the votaries of intemperance.

The moment I saw the patient, I knew his disease; and the particulars furnished to me by an old woman who kept his house only corroborated my opinion. The remedies in such cases are well known to us, and were instantly applied. He remained in the same state nearly all the next day; but began to show symptoms of recovery on the morning following. Nature prevailed, and he got gradually better; having, while his weakness was on him, a strong *antipathy* to ardent spirits—a symptom of the drunkard I have often observed. The interest I felt in him made me call often; and I had a long conversation with him on the philosophy and *morale* of his intemperance. He went himself to the very depths of the subject; and I found, what I have often done in regard to other drunkards, that no one knew better the predisposing causes, the resisting energies, the consequences—everything connected with the fearful vice; but all his philosophy ended, as these often do, in the melancholy sentence, that "there are powers within us greater than reason or philosophy."

After the fearful attack he had had, he remained sober for about a month, and got a great length with his Scripture-piece. I called often to see his progress, to inspirit him in a continuation of his efforts, and support him in his self-denial. Matters seemed to be progressing well, and I hinted as much to his housekeeper; but she shook her head, and replied, calmly, "that she had seen the same scene acted, ten times a-year, for ten years." She added, "that he would break out again in a day or two;" and accordingly, on the next day, I discovered he had begun to lag in his work, to draw deep sighs, and to exhibit a listlessness, all premonitory signs of a relapse. Knowing that he was at times a smoker, I suggested to him the trial of tobacco, at this critical period. He said he had tried that remedy before; but acknowledged that perhaps he had not carried it far enough. I therefore set him agoing; advising him to keep to it

steadily, for I had succeeded once before, in a very extreme case, in drawing out the one vice by the other—undoubtedly a lesser. So he began well, and persevered for about a week, during which time he had also got pretty well on with his work, having finished in that time two of the most difficult heads in the whole piece.

I had now some greater hopes of him, and told the housekeeper to do what she could to aid me in my efforts. Two days afterwards I called, and met the old woman at the door. She shook her head ominously as I passed her. I opened the door, and went in. On a chair opposite to his picture sat the artist, with his pallet in his left hand—the brush had fallen from his right—his head was hung over the back of the chair, and his cravatless neck bent almost to breaking. Beside him sat a bottle empty; there was no glass beside it. I took up the vessel, and smelled it. It had been filled with whisky. I now looked at the picture. It was destroyed. His burin had been drawn over it like a mop, and dashed backwards and forwards, as if he had taken a spite at it, and been determined to put an end in one moment to the work of six months!

There was now no occasion for a doctor; a drunkard fairly broken out is far beyond our help or care. I left him, and told the housekeeper to call and tell me when the fit was over. She did so; and I called again. I found him sitting on the same chair, perfectly sober, but so thin and wan, that he seemed like one taken from that place "where one inheriteth creeping things, and beasts, and worms." His languid bloodshot eye was fixed on the picture, and tears were stealing down his white cheeks. When I entered, he held his hands up to his face, to cover the shame that mantled on his cheek, and deep sobs heaved his bosom. I was moved, and sat down beside him without speaking a word.

"O God!" he exclaimed, "what am I to do with my-

self? Is there no remedy against this vice?—has the great Author of our being thus left us with an inheritance of reason, and a power that sits like a cockatrice on our brains, and laughs at the God-sent gift? See—see the fruit of six months' hard labour! I expected fame from that, and money. I would have got both. The fiend has triumphed. When I awoke from my dream, I heard his laugh behind the canvas. I am undone."

And he wrung his hands like a demented person, and sobbed bitterly. I was still silent; for any words I could have uttered would have destroyed the impressiveness of the scene before me. When I had allowed the sensation of remorse to sink deeper into him, I spoke:—

"I am glad that you have wrought this destruction," said I. "You have produced an antidote to your own poison—let it work. I have no medicines in my laboratory that have half the efficacy of that once splendid emanation of your genius—now the monument of your folly, and to be, as I hope, the prophylactic to save you from ruin and death."

'Ah, God help me! it is a dear medicine," groaned he. "I feel that I never can produce such a work again."

And he hung down his head, as if the blackest cloud that covers hope had thrown over him its dark shadow. I again observed silence, and he remained with his head on his breast for several minutes, without exhibiting a symptom of life beyond the deep sigh that raised his ribs.

"You must hang that picture upon the wall," said I. "It is the most valuable you ever painted. Look at it daily, and, before the sun goes down, begin another on the same subject."

My words produced no effect upon him, and indeed I knew that he was in a condition that entirely excluded external aid to his revolving thoughts. He was in the pit of dejection, which lies on the far side of the elevation of factitious

excitement—a place of darkness, where the scorpions of conscience sting to madness, and every thought that rises in the gloomy, bewildered mind appears like a ghost that walks at midnight over open graves and bones of the dead. To some, these spectres have spoken in such a way as to rouse the dormant principles of energetic amendment, that lie beyond the reach of precept, or even that of conscience; but to the greater part of mankind this place of wailing and gnashing of teeth yields nothing but an agony that only tends to make them climb again the delusive mount from which they had fallen, though only again to be precipitated into the dreadful abode where, in the end, *they must die.* I knew that words had no effect upon my patient. I rose accordingly, and left him to the unmitigated horrors of his situation, in the expectation that he might be one of the few that derive from it good. I had no fear of his falling again, immediately, into another fit; for the period of nausea was only begun, and he was safe in the keeping of a rebelling stomach, whatever he might be in that of burning conscience.

He remained, as his housekeeper told me, in that state of depression for two days, often recurring to the monument of his folly, the destroyed Scripture-piece; weeping over it, and ejaculating wild professions of amendment, clenched by oaths in which the blessed name of God was mad the guarantee of the strength of a resolution which the demon of his vice was standing with glaring eyes ready to overturn. I have no faith in outspoken resolves of wordy declamation: not sure of ourselves, we fortify our weak resolutions through the ear and the eye, by spoken and written adjurations, and promises of amendment. After the medicine of dejection had wrought its utmost effect, I waited upon him. He was arrayed in melancholy and gloom: but the agony of the lowest pit was gone, and he stood on a dangerous middle place, between a temporary fulfilment of his resolutions and a relapse. With

a patient of this sort I never *continue* a system of argumentation and disputation. I am satisfied it does injury; for it reaches the moral sore only to irritate it, and an argument surmounted, or sworn resolution vanquished, is a triumph and a *pabulum* to the spirit of the foe greater than years of domination. I told him, what he confessed frankly, that he stood, for a day or two, on the dangerous ground from which he had so often fallen, and requested him authoritatively, as if I had assumed the reins of his judgment which he had thrown over the back of his passions, to begin instantly another painting, and try once more the American weed. Command sometimes, persuasion never, succeeds with a drunkard. He set about stretching his canvas, and put on the first coat of the foundation of his picture. I told him I would call again in a week; but that, as it was not a part of my profession to reclaim drunkards, I would discontinue my efforts in his behalf, if I found that, at the end of that time, he had swerved from his resolution. The sense of degradation in the mind of these lost votaries of intemperance, while it inclines the unhappy individuals often to resign themselves to the command (from which, however, they often break) of those they respect, responds keenly to the manifestations of disregard and loss of esteem with which they are visited in consequence of their failing. He felt strongly the manner of my treatment, and I thought and observed even tears working for vent from his still bloodshot eyes.

"You, and all good men, have a privilege to despise him who has not the approval of his own conscience," he said. "I could bear your persuasive reproof; but the thought that I have rendered myself unworthy of the trouble of one I esteem, to save me from the ruin I have madly prepared for myself, sends me to that deep pit of despair, from which I have even now struggled to get free. You saved me from death; and I was no sooner cured than I plunged headlong

again into the gulf from which my disease was derived. I have made myself an ingrate, and a beggar; spurned your advice, and destroyed the work from which I expected honour and reward. I see myself as through a microscope, and you have diminished me still farther. Heaven help me!"

"You have powers within you, sir," replied I, with affected sternness, "through the medium of which you might have surveyed yourself as through the telescope; and your size would not have been greater than that potential moral magnitude to which you might long ere now have arrived, and which is still within your own power. I exhort not—I leave you to yourself.—*In te omne recumbit.*"

"I know it, I know it," he cried, with a swelling throat. "My ruin or my salvation lies within my own breast. For ten years I have resolved, and re-resolved; and it is only three days since I destroyed that picture, and rose with fiery eyes and a burning heart to survey the consequences of my vice. O God! where is this to end? You saw what I suffered when extended on that bed, racked with pain; my brain on fire; my intellect overturned; my muscles twisted by spasms; my eyes and ears tortured by imaginary sights and sounds; with conscience in the back-ground, waiting till reason should bring to the avenging angel its victim. In that every mortal on earth might have found a lesson, but a drunkard. I found none. The very fire of my fever filled my soul with a thirst which precipitated me again deeper than ever in my old sin. I have got my senses again; and my bloodshot eyes have surveyed, and shall survey, that sad monument of my vice and folly—that child of my dreams, with which my pregnant fancy travailed with a delightful pain; and to which my fond hopes of honour, wealth, and happiness were directed—now, alas! dead—killed by my rebellious hand. From that dead body I have extracted a virtue which, with the powers of the amulet, shall guard me more effectually than the lesson of my

bodily agony from further destruction. Believe me, sir. Aid me once again. If I fail this time, discard me for ever."

As he finished, he hung his head over the chair, and covered his face with his hands, to hide from me his agonised face. I told him that it was my intention to try what effect the destroyed picture would have upon him.

"You have made a fair beginning," said I. "Persevere—keep to the new picture to-morrow and to-morrow. I shall call in a week."

"You shall find me at work, and an altered man," he said; and a blush came over his face, as he tried to open some subject to me of a delicate nature. "I—I have for some time thought," he continued, "that the way in which I live—a bachelor, with few domestic enjoyments—has a part of the blame of this horrid vice that has taken possession of my soul. Had I a wife, my sensibilities would be fed, my ennui relieved, my home made comfortable, and my ardour for my profession keeping my mind in the delightful bondage of fancy, I might thus satisfy all the cravings of my feelings, and be independent of the liquid fire and the envenomed weed."

"You are a perfect Æsculapius," replied I. "Had I lectured to you for a week from the manual of Galen, I could not have suggested a better medicine; but, mark you, I know not if you have properly described the manner of its operation. A wife will do all for you that you have described; but there is a greater virtue in her; and that is, that she *ought* to produce in you a salutary terror of making her unhappy. This is a part of love—and I know no greater conservative element of the pure passion. If you fall again into your old habits, you will render an innocent individual miserable; and that thought ought to make you fly the poison as if it were distilled from the herbs of Medea or Circe."

"Oh, I feel it, I feel it," he replied; "and am thankful

to you for the suggestion. Like Pygmalion, I fell in love with a face that I sculptured last year. Every line I chiselled was engraven on my heart, and I have dreamed of her ever since. She is herself an artist, and paints beautifully. Our sympathies are kindred; and, though I never declared my passion, from a fear that my bad reputation for inebriety may have reached her, I have *looked* it, and have reason to think that I may succeed."

"Try," said I; "and I shall then have every hope of you."

I left him, and heard some time afterwards that he had married a very pretty young lady, the daughter of an old artist that lived in the same town. It was not, however, (as I understood), till he had made a solemn promise and *oath* to the old gentleman, who was possessed of some eccentricities, that he would renounce his habit of drinking, that the young female artist was yielded to him. I felt still the same interest in the man of genius, and called shortly after the marriage, to see how his *medicine* had wrought. I found him as happy as the day was long. His picture was going on even during the honeymoon, and seemed to reflect a part of the sweet luminary's glory. The young wife, who was really pretty, and imbued with a strong love of both the artist and his art, looked over his shoulder as he proceeded with his work. I was delighted with the couple, and told him that the moment he had finished the picture he was occupied with, I wished him to give me a portrait of "the Doctor." He promised; and I left them, in the confidence—at times interfered with by my experience of the insidious power of the demon—that he would never again have recourse to his old habit.

"To go to see a cousin" is, as all married people know, a very pretty and very usual mode of keeping up the flame of love in the hearts of the young worshippers of Hymen. Mrs G—— went, accordingly (so I learned at a future

period), to see a friend who lived in the country. The artist was left again by himself, and promised to his loving wife, who left him with a kiss of true affection, that he would have the piece he was engaged on finished by the time she returned, when he was to commence with my portrait.

"Never fear, Maria," he said, as he embraced her. "You have made me a new man. God bless you for it! I am happy now. Oh, that blessed thought, so opportunely confirmed by Dr ——! I shall paint him like an angel for it."

And, laughing through his tears, he again kissed her, and she left the house with the intention of returning in a week, with an affection increased, and the satisfaction of seeing the painting imbued with all the glory of his high genius.

I was, in the meantime, and while these love matters were going on, engaged in the pursuits of my profession. I knew nothing of them, but wished them happy, and thought all was right. I was sitting, after a day's labour, in my study. It was about eleven o'clock at night. I was startled by the artist's old housekeeper, who burst in upon me in great terror. Her eyes were absolutely starting from their sockets; and she stood before me with her mouth open, but without being able, for a time, to utter a syllable.

"What is the matter?" said I.

"Come to my master, for heaven's sake!" she cried, after some struggles of the throat. "He is vomiting fire."

"What can the woman mean?" said I, as I took up my hat, and hastened to the victim.

I soon found a sufficient explanation. The poor artist was lying on his back on the floor. There were a great number of empty bottles scattered *per aversionem* round him. A blue, flickering flame was burning in his mouth, which was as black as a piece of coal. His eyeballs were

turned up, and convulsive movements shook his frame. I was at no loss for the cause. A tobacco-pipe and a candle were beside him. After he had filled his stomach with whisky for six days, and drunk no fewer than thirteen bottles, he had, in endeavouring to light his pipe, set fire to the spirit that lay on his lips and in his mouth—the flame sought its way down the pharynx till it came to the full body of liquid in his stomach, and all was, in a moment, on fire. I need not dwell on the issue of this case. The poor artist was dead in an hour. Where was his resolution? This is no overcharged picture of the effects of drunkenness.

THE BRIDE.

Fifty years ago, William Percy rented a farm that consisted of about a hundred acres, and which was situated on the banks of the Till. His wife, though not remarkable for her management of a farmhouse, was a woman of many virtues, and possessed of a kind and affectionate heart. They had an only daughter, whose name was Agnes; and, as she approached towards womanhood, people began to designate her the *Rose of Till-side.* Her beauty was not of the kind that dazzles or excites sudden admiration; but it grew upon the sight like the increasing brightness of a young rainbow—its influence stole over the soul as moonlight on the waters. It was pleasant to look upon her fair countenance, where sweetness gave a character to beauty, mellowing it and softening it, as though the soul of innocence there reflected its image. Many said that no one could look upon the face of Agnes Percy and sin. Her hair was of the lightest brown, her eyes of the softest blue, and the lovely rose which bears the name of *Maiden's Blush* is not more delicate in the soft glow of its colouring than was the vermilion tint upon her cheeks. She was of middle stature, and her figure might have served a sculptor as a model. But she was good and gentle as she was beautiful. The widow mentioned her name in her prayers—the poor blessed her.

Now, Agnes was about eighteen, when a young man of her own age, named Henry Cranstoun, took up his residence for a few months in her father's house. He was the son of a distant relative of her mother, and was then articled as a clerk or apprentice to a writer to the signet in Edin-

burgh. He also was the only child of his parents; for, though they had had eight others, he was all that death had left them. He was the youngest son of his mother; and there was a time when there was no mother had greater cause to be proud of her children. Yea, as they hand in hand, or one by one, went forth on the Sabbath morning with their parents to their place of worship, there was not an eye that looked not with delight or admiration on the little Cranstouns. The neatness of their dress, the loveliness of every countenance, the family likeness of each, the apparent affection of all, the propriety of their demeanour, interested all who looked upon them. But as untimely flowers, that by a returning frost are stricken down in beauty, so drooped, so perished, this fair and happy family. Some had said that they were too beautiful to live; and, as they also manifested much quickness and wisdom for their years, there were others who said to Mrs Cranstoun, as she was shedding their shining hair upon their brows, that she would never comb an old head! This is a cold, cruel, and ignorant prophecy; it has sent foreboding and unhappiness into the bosom of many a fond mother; but, in this case, it needed not the gift of a seer to foretell the gloomy tidings. Consumption lurked amidst the beauty that glowed on every cheek; and seven of the fair family had fallen victims to the progress of the insidious destroyer, till Henry alone was left. And now, even upon him also, it seemed to have set its mark. The hollow cough and the flushed cheek, the languidness by day and the restlessness by night, gave evidence that the disease was there.

Change of air and less study were recommended by the physicians, as the only means by which Henry might be saved; and he was sent over to Northumberland, to the house of William Percy, his mother's friend.

It was about that period of the year which is spoken of as the "fall of the leaf," when Henry Cranstoun first arrived

at Till-side. William Percy had just gathered in his harvest, and Henry met with the kindly welcome of a primitive family. The father and mother, and their daughter, received him as one whom they were to snatch from the hands of death. In a few days, the goat's milk, and the bracing air, which came with health on its wings from the adjacent mountains, wrought a visible change in the appearance of the invalid. His cough became more softened, his eyes less languid, his step more firm, and he panted not as he walked. He felt returning strength flowing through his veins—in his bosom, in the moving of his fingers, he felt it. He walked out by the side of Agnes—she led him by the banks of the Till, by the foot of the hills, by the woods where the brown leaves were falling, and by the solitary glen.

Perhaps I might have said that the presence of Agnes contributed not less than the mountain air and the change of scenery to his restoration to health. Of this I have not been told. Certain it is that her beauty and her gentleness had spread their influence over his heart, as spring, with its wooing breath, awakens the dreaming earth from its winter sleep. It was not the season when nature calls forth the soul to love; for the cushat was silent in the woods, the mavis voiceless on the thorn, the birds were dumb on every spray, the wild-flowers had closed their leaves and drooped, and the meadows lost their fragrance. But, as they wandered forth together, a lark started up at their feet; it raised its autumn song over their heads; it poured it in their ears. Both raised their eyes in joy towards the singing bird; they listened to it with delight. His fingers were pressed on hers as he heard it, as though he would have said—"How sweet it is!" But the lustre forsook his eyes while he yet listened—he sighed, and was silent. They returned home together, and Agnes strove to cheer him; but his spirit was heavy, and he pressed her hand more fervently in his. The

song of the lark seemed to have touched a chord of sadness in his bosom.

Henry was heard walking backward and forward in his room throughout the night; and on the following morning at breakfast he put a paper into the hands of Agnes, on which was written the following rhymes:—

THE LARK'S AUTUMNAL SONG.

(INSCRIBED TO AGNES PERCY.)

Again in the heavens thy hymn is heard,
Bird of the daring wing!
When last ye sprang from the daisied sward,
Making the welkin ring,
Thy lay the dreaming buds awoke—
Thy voice the spell of winter broke—
The primrose, on the mossy brae,
Burst beauteous into life and day,
And smiled to hear thee sing!
The children clapp'd their tiny hands;
The shout rang through their little bands,
Hailing the bird of spring!
Thy lay made earth and air rejoice,
And nature heard thee as an angel's voice.
Again in the heavens thy hymn is heard,
Bird of the mournful song!
A lonely daisy yet decks the sward,
The last of the summer throng.
While here and there, upon the brae,
Some primrose, *languid as the ray*
Of hope that vanisheth away
Upon the cheek of death,
Untimely opes its golden wing,
Mistaking, as it hears thee sing,
That thou art come to tell of spring,
And not of winter's wrath.
But now thy strain is as one that grieves—
Thou singest the dirge of the falling leaves!
Again in the heavens thy hymn I hear,
Bird of the merry song!

Thou art ringing a lay in old winter's ear—
Ye bid him farewell, and ye welcome him here—
Ye help the old man along!
Ye are singing to look on the fruits of the year
Gather'd in, and in ripeness, with plenty around;
And ye pour o'er earth's fulness a rapturous sound.
Ye are singing a strain that man should have sung—
Man with ingratitude seal'd on his tongue:
At *seed-time*, thy joyous and *hope-breathing* lay,
To the ploughman was sung, as an anthem, all day,
And now at his *harvest* ye greet him again,
And call him to join in thy *thanksgiving* strain.

Agnes wept as she perused the foreboding lines, which he had marked in what printers call Italics, in the second stanza, by drawing a line under them. She felt interested in the fate of Henry Cranstoun—deeply interested. We believe that, like the gentle Desdemona, she wished that

"Heaven had made her such a man;"

for, though the young writer to the signet spoke not

"Of war, and broils, and battles,"

his tongue was the interpreter of nature—he dwelt as an enthusiast on its beauties, its mysteries, its benevolence, its glorious design; and, through all, he would point

"Through nature up to nature's God!"

It is a common saying, "that you cannot put an old head upon young shoulders!" but, if ever the truth of the saying might be disputed, it was in the case of Henry Cranstoun. The deaths of his brothers and his sisters had rested upon his young mind—they had struck it with awe—they had made him to feel that he, too, must die—he, indeed, felt as though the shadow of death were creeping over him; and the thoughts and the hopes of eternity early became the companions of his spirit. He treasured up the words of the inspired preacher, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth." He treasured them up, and he practised them;

and his deportment gave him a deeper interest in the eyes of the Northumberland farmer and his family.

William Percy was esteemed by his neighbours as a church-going and a good man. He was kind to his servants; he paid every man his own; he was an affectionate husband and a fond father; the poor turned not away murmuring from his door; and every Sunday night he knelt with his wife and with his daughter, before their Maker, in worship, as though it were a duty which was to be discharged but once in seven days. Now, it was late on Saturday night when Henry Cranstoun arrived at their house; and, on the following evening, he joined in the devotions of the family. But Monday night came, and the supper passed, and the Bibles were not brought. Henry inquired—

"Is it not time for worship?"

The question went to the conscience of the farmer—he felt that before his Creator, who preserved him, who gave him every breath he drew, he had knelt with his family but once a-week. "Is not He the Almighty of all time and of all eternity?" asked his conscience; "and have I not served Him as though He were Lord of the Sabbath only? I forsake him for a week—where should I be if He left me but for a moment?"

"Agnes, love," said he aloud, "bring the books."

She cheerfully obeyed, and the Bibles were laid upon the table. The psalm was read, and the voice of praise was raised; and as the hinds in the adjoining houses heard the sound, they followed the example of their master. Hitherto, like their employer, they had lifted their voices in thanksgiving but once a-week, as if a few minutes spent in praise and in prayer, and in the reading of a chapter, were all that was necessary for example to a family, or for gratitude to Him who sustained, protected, and gave them being from moment to moment. I should not dwell upon this, were it not that there are many good and Christian parents

who conceive that they fulfil the injunction of "praying often with and for their children," by causing them to kneel around them on a Sabbath night. But this, certainly, is a poor fulfilment of the oath which they have taken—or which, if they have not taken, they are equally bound to perform. I do not say that the man who daily prays with his family will have the gratification of seeing all of them following in his footsteps, or that all of them will think as he thinks; but he may be of one sect, and some of them of another; yet, let them go where they will—let them be thrown into what company they may—let temptation assail them in every form, and absence throw its shadows over their father's house—yet the remembrance, the fervour, the words of a father's prayers, will descend upon their souls like a whisper from heaven, kindling the memory and awakening the conscience; and if the child of such a man depart into sin, the small still voice will not die in his ear. Nay, the remembrance of the father's voice will be heard in the son's heart above the song of the bacchanal, and the lowly remembered voice of psalms rise upon his memory, making him insensible to the peal of instruments. I have listened to the sonorous swell of the organ in the Roman church and the Episcopal cathedral, to the chant of the choristers and the music of the anthem, and I have been awed by the sounds; but they produced not the feelings of peace and of reverence—I might say of religion—which are inspired by the lowly voices of a congregated family joining together in their hymn of praise. I have thought that such sounds, striking on the ear of the guilty, would arrest them in their progress.

Such was the change which Henry Cranstoun introduced into the house of his host. From that moment, Agnes regarded him with a deeper interest, her father loved him, and her mother looked on him as a son. But, although his mind had been early imbued with serious impressions, he

was a lover of all that was beautiful in nature—he was warm of heart and eloquent of speech—and his form was such as the eye of a maiden might look on with complacency.

Christmas had passed before he left the house of his mother's friend, and health again glowed on his cheeks, strength revisited his frame. No one that saw Henry Cranstoun upon his entering the house of Mr Percy three months before, and who had not seen him in the meanwhile, would have known him to be the same individual. But Agnes noted no change in him. She knew that his health was now restored; but she had begun to hope and love at the same moment, and she had never thought that Henry would die. His eyes had ever been bright to her—his voice ever pleasing; and her beauty, her gentleness, her sweetness of temper, her kindness, her looks, her tones of affection, had fallen upon his bosom, till every thought, save the thought of Agnes, was banished.

He was to leave her father's house: he bade her *farewell.* Till that moment, they had not known how dear they were unto each other. They had never spoken of love; and, to hearts that do love, there is little need for such declarations. The affection of every glance, the guarded delicacy of every action, speaks it more plainly than the impassioned eloquence of language. True eloquence is feeling, and feeling dictates the words to be used, pouring them forth in the full tide of the heart's emotion; but, though love also be feeling, it is not of that kind which makes men eloquent. True love is dumb as true gratitude. It speaks from the glowing eye and the throbbing bosom; from the hand passionately grasped—not from the tongue.

Henry and Agnes said little; but they fell upon the necks of each other when they parted. She wept, and from his eyes the tear was ready to fall. He kissed her brow, and said that in the spring he would return.

He left Northumberland, and his parents welcomed him as one received from the dead. He was strong and healthy, and he alone, of all their children, seemed to have overcome the power of the destroyer. Yet a week never passed but he wrote to his friends, who had snatched him as from the gates of death; or rather, I should say, that he wrote to the gentle Agnes, requesting that the expression of his gratitude might be given to her parents, until he returned to thank them. But spring came; and with it Henry Cranstoun returned to Till-side. Health still glowed in his eyes, and beamed upon his cheeks. He was fond of angling, and, with his rod in his hand, he sought amusement in the gentle art; yet his favourite pastime afforded him no pleasure, save when Agnes was by his side, and then they would sit down on the brae-side together, with her hand in his, and the fishing-rod on the ground, and they forgot that he had gone out to fish, until evening came, and he returned with his creel empty.

Thus five years passed on, and twice in every year Henry Cranstoun visited his friends in Northumberland. He had commenced practice in Edinburgh; fair prospects opened before him; his marriage-day was fixed; and need I say that the bride was Agnes?

The ceremony was to be performed in the parish church, which was situated about a mile from her father's house. Henry was only expected to arrive an hour or two before the marriage was to take place. The bosom of fair Agnes throbbed with tumultuous joy. Her parents gazed upon her, blessed her, and were happy. She sat before them, arrayed, a bride for the altar. He whom she loved and they esteemed was that day to make her his wife. Her mother gazed on her with pride—she blessed her Agnes. Her father's heart glowed within him. The bridemaidens were come—Agnes was impatient, but still happy; no fear, no doubt, had risen in her mind. She knew her Henry.

But the last hour arrived, and Henry came not. Her uneasiness increased. The servants were sent to a neighbouring hill; but no chaise, no horseman, appeared in sight. Agnes became unhappy; paleness overspread her cheeks. The company were silent. Her father's watch hung over the mantelpiece, and she sat at the opposite side of the room; yet its ticking fell upon her ears slow and heavy, as sounds from a hammer on an anvil. Tears, which she had struggled to conceal, now gathered in her eyes. Some evil had befallen Henry, she said, and wept.

The hour which had been appointed for the ceremony was past; but still he came not. Her fears, her anxiety, increased, and she wept the more, refusing to be comforted. She knew not what she feared; but her breast was filled with misery. She had received a letter from him but three days before. She read it again—it breathed the language of impassioned affection, but his truth she doubted not; yet there was an incoherency, a vehemence, in some parts of the letter, which were not like the style of Henry. A vague horror shot across her thoughts, and her hand trembled, as she laid the letter aside.

Still the servants were despatched to see if he approached, and at length they brought tidings that two horsemen were riding towards the house. Agnes strove to wipe away the tears from her eyes, but her heart yet throbbed, and others rose in their place. The horsemen drew near the house. Those of the company who beheld them from the windows drew back with a look of dismay. Agnes clasped her hands together, as she beheld the expression of their countenances. The evil she apprehended was about to be revealed. The parish clergyman and the minister of the congregation to which Mr Percy belonged entered the room. She started from her seat as they entered—she wrung her hands on her bosom—her eyes seemed fixed and motionless with misery—her lips moved—her tongue struggled for utterance.

"Be comforted!" said one of the reverend visiters, kindly.

"Is my Henry dead?" she exclaimed—"is he dead?"

"He is not dead," was the reply; "but ——" and the clergyman hesitated a moment to proceed.

"*His mind is dead!*" added the wretched bride, and sank back in her mother's arms. The dismal thought flashed upon her soul; the vague horror that she had shrunk from before became tangible—the incoherence and vehemence of passages in his last letter were suddenly and fearfully interpreted.

The tidings which the clergyman had to communicate, her fears had already told. The mind of Henry Cranstoun had become a wreck. A cloud fell upon his reason; and, on the day that he was to lead his bride to the altar, he was placed an inmate of the gloomy cells of Bedlam.

Several months had passed, and the grief of Agnes became more tranquil, but not less deep. She entreated permission to visit her bridegroom in the place of his confinement, and her parents fondly endeavoured to dissuade her from her purpose; but it became the one—the ruling wish of her heart—and they consented. Her father accompanied her to the dreary prison-house. But I shall not attempt to describe the heartrending interview, nor to tell how the iron which fettered him entered her soul. He knew her—he wept before her as a child—he exclaimed, "My brain!—my brain!" and pressed his hand upon his brow. Around him were strewed scraps of paper; she beheld her name upon each; they were covered with verses of love and of wildness. But I will not dwell upon the harrowing scene, upon the words that were spoken, and the fitful gleams of reason that flitted across his soul, as his eyes remained riveted on the face he loved. But when her father, with a faltering voice, suggested that they should depart, and took her hand to lead her from the cell, a scream of loud and bitter agony burst from the wretched maniac. "Agnes

—Agnes!" he cried; and his wailing was as the lamentation of a lost spirit. Anguish overpowered her, and she was borne insensible from the cell in her father's arms.

Seven long and dreary years passed, and the mind of Henry was still bewildered; still was he an inmate of the melancholy asylum, and no hope was entertained of his recovery. But the heart of Agnes knew no change—for him she still shed the secret tear and offered up the secret prayer.

But her father's fortunes were altered. He had been induced to enter into a speculation with one who deceived him, and in it the industry of years was swallowed up and lost. He was obliged to leave his farm, and he now resided in a small cottage in its neighbourhood. Still there were many who sought the hand of the fair Rose of Till-side; but she chose rather to brood over the remembrance of poor ruined Henry than to listen to their addresses. But amongst them was a young gentleman named Walker, whose condition was far above hers, and who for two years had vainly sought a place in her affections. In the day of her father's distress, he had been his friend, and he yet sought to place him again in a state of independence. The health of Mr Percy, also, began to decline; the infirmities of age were growing upon him; and the little that he had been able to save from the wreck of his capital was wasting rapidly away. He became melancholy with the thought that he should die a pauper, or leave his wife and his daughter in want; and, in the presence of Agnes, he often spoke of Mr Walker—of the excellence of his character—of his wealth—of what he had done for him in the midst of his misfortunes—of what he still desired to do—and of his affection for her. She listened to her father's words in sorrow and in silence, and, on her pillow by night, she wept because of them. To her the remembrance of Henry Cranstoun was dearer than the temptations of wealth, and her heart clung to him with a constancy which

neither time, misery, nor hopelessness could shake. She was grateful to her father's friend for the kindness he had shown him, and for the generosity of the proposals he had made—yet she found that she could not love him, that her bosom had room for none but Henry.

Poverty, however, entered her parents' dwelling, and her father seemed drooping for lack of nourishment which his increasing feebleness required. Her mother, too, sat silent and melancholy, occasionally raising her eyes to her daughter's face, with a look that implored her to save her father. The old man had been ordered wine daily; but their penury was now such that they could not purchase it, and the plainest food had become scanty on their table.

Such was their situation, and they were sitting sorrowful together, when Mr Walker entered the room. He approached Agnes respectfully, he took her hand.

"Dear Agnes," he began, "can one with so kind a heart look with indifference on the wants and the sufferings of a father and a mother? It is in your power to make them happy, to restore them to prosperity. For two years I have sought your hand, without meeting one look of encouragement or one word of hope. Yet believe me, Agnes, I admire the constancy which induces you to cherish a hopeless passion, and reject me. If not for my sake, yet for the sake of your poor father, for that of your fond mother, yea, for your own sake, dearest, permit me to call you mine. I do not ask your love now; give me but your esteem, and I will study to deserve your affection. Dear friends, plead for me," he added, addressing her parents.

Her father laid his hand upon hers—"Dear Agnes," said he, "your father is now a poor man—he is very poor. I fear the hand of death is already upon me; and when I am gone, who will provide for your poor mother—who will protect thee, my child? It is the only wish of my heart to see you provided for, and your father would die in peace. And

oh, my Agnes, as your father's dying request, permit me to bestow your hand upon this generous youth."

"Save us, my sweet one!" cried her mother, and she flung her arms around her daughter's neck.

"It is done!" exclaimed Agnes, bursting into tears; and she stretched out her hand to Mr Walker.

A few weeks afterwards, and the village bells rang a merry peal, children scattered flowers, and there was joy on every face, save upon the face of the fair bride, who went as a sacrifice to the altar. She heard not the words of the clergyman as he read the ceremony. She trembled, she would have fallen to the ground, but that the bridesmaid supported her.

The marriage party were returning by a footpath from the church, the sorrowful bride resting on the arm of her bridegroom. A stranger met them—he turned aside, that they might pass. His eyes fell upon the countenance of the bride.

"O Heavens! my Agnes!" cried the stranger, in a voice of agony.

"Henry! my Henry!" screamed the wretched bride, and, starting from the side of the bridegroom, she sank on the breast of the stranger.

That stranger was indeed Henry Cranstoun. A severe illness had brought him to the verge of death, and with his restoration to health reason was restored also. He had come to take his bride to his bosom—he met her the bride of another. It was a scene of misery

"O Agnes! Agnes!" groaned Henry, "would to Heaven I had died! You are another's, though your heart is mine! Farewell! Farewell!—we must meet no more! I have endured much, but never misery like this!"

She could only exclaim, "Henry!" and speech failed her—recollection fled. Henry Cranstoun struck his hand upon his brow, and rushed wildly away. Agnes was con-

veyed to her father's house, as being nearer than that of her bridegroom's. She was laid upon her bed, she seemed unconscious of all around, and her tongue only uttered the word "Henry." She rose not again from the bed on which she was laid, and within a week her gentle spirit fled. The shock which Henry had met with occasioned a relapse of the fever from which he had but recently recovered. He was taken to the village inn. He felt that death was about to terminate his sufferings, and when he heard of the death of his Agnes, he requested to be buried by her side. Within three weeks he died, and his latest wish was fulfilled—he was laid by the side of Agnes Percy, and a rose-tree was planted over their grave.

THE HENPECKED MAN.

EVERY one has heard the phrase, "*Go to Birgham!*" which signifies much the same as bidding you go to a worse place. The phrase is familiar not only on the Borders, but throughout all Scotland, and has been in use for more than five hundred years, having taken its rise from Birgham being the place where the Scottish nobility were when they dastardly betrayed their country into the hands of the first Edward; and the people, despising the conduct and the cowardice of the nobles, have rendered the saying, "*Go to Birgham!*" an expression of contempt until this day. Many, however, may have heard the saying, and even used it, who know not that Birgham is a small village, beautifully situated on the north side of the Tweed, about midway between Coldstream and Kelso; though, if I should say that the village itself is beautiful, I should be speaking on the wrong side of the truth. Yet there may be many who have both heard the saying and seen the place, who never heard of little Patie Crichton, the bicker-maker. Patie was of diminutive stature, and he followed the profession (if the members of the *learned professions* be not offended at my using the term) of a cooper, or bicker-maker, in Birgham for many years. His neighbours used to say of him, "The puir body's henpecked."

Patie was in the habit of attending the neighbouring fairs with the water-cogs, cream-bowies, bickers, piggins, and other articles of his manufacture. It was Dunse fair, and Patie said he "had done extraordinar' weel—the sale had been far beyond what he expeckit." His success might be attributed to the circumstance that, when out of the sight

and hearing of his better half, for every bicker he sold, he gave his customers half-a-dozen jokes into the bargain. Every one, therefore, liked to deal with little Patie. The fair being over, he retired with a crony to a public-house in the Castle Wynd, to crack of old stories over a glass, and inquire into each other's welfare. It was seldom they met, and it was as seldom that Patie dared to indulge in a single glass; but, on the day in question, he thought they could manage another gill, and another was brought. Whether the sight of it reminded him of his domestic miseries, and of what awaited him at home, I cannot tell; but, after drinking another glass, and pronouncing the spirits excellent, he thus addressed his friend:—

"Ay, Robin" (his friend's name was Robin Roughead), "ye're a happy man—ye're maister in your ain hoose, and ye've a wife that adores and *obeys* ye; but I'm nae better than naebody at my ain fireside. I'll declare I'm waur: wife an' bairns laugh at me—I'm treated like an outlan' body an' a fule. Though without me they micht gang an' beg, there is nae mair respeck paid to me than if I were a pair o' auld bauchels flung into a corner. Fifteen years syne I couldna believed it o' Tibby, though onybody had sworn it to me. I firmly believe that a guid wife is the greatest blessin that can be conferred upon a man upon this earth. I can imagine it by the treasure that my faither had in my mither; for, though the best may hae *words* atween them occasionally, and I'm no saying that they hadna, yet they were just like passin showers, to mak' the kisses o' the sun upon the earth mair sweet after them. Her whole study was to please him and to mak' him comfortable. She was never happy but when he was happy; an' he was just the same wi' her. I've heard him say that she was worth untold gold. But, O Robin! if I think that a guid wife is the greatest blessin a man can enjoy, weel do I ken that a scoldin, domineerin wife is his greatest curse. It's a ter-

rible thing to be snooled in your ain house—naebody can form an idea o't but they wha experience it.

"Ye remember whan I first got acquainted wi' Tibby, she was doing the bondage work at Riselaw. I first saw her coming out o' Eccles kirk ae day, and I really thocht that I had never seen a better-faured or a more gallant-looking lass. Her cheeks were red and white like a half-ripe strawberry, or rather, I should say, like a cherry; and she seemed as modest and meek as a lamb. It wasna very lang until I drew up; and, though she didna gie me ony great encouragement at first, yet, in a week or twa, after the ice was fairly broken, she became remarkably ceevil, and gied me her oxter on a Sunday. We used to saunter about the loanings, no saying meikle, but unco happy; and I was aye restless whan I was out o' her sight. Ye may guess that the shoemaker was nae loser by it during the six months that I ran four times a-week, wet or dry, between Birgham and Riselaw. But the term-time was drawing nigh, and I put the important question, and pressed her to name the day. She hung her head, and she seemed no to ken weel what to say; for she was sae mim and sae gentle then, that ye wad hae said 'butter wadna melt in her mouth.' And when I pressed her mair urgently—

"'I'll just leave it to yersel, Peter,' says she.

"I thocht my heart wad louped out at my mouth. I believe there never was a man sae beside himsel wi' joy in this warld afore. I fairly danced again, and cut as many antics as a merryandrew. 'O Tibby,' says I,

> 'I'm owre happy now!—Oh, haud my head!
> This gift o' joy is like to be my dead.'

"'I hope no, Peter,' said she; 'I wad rather hae ye to live than dee for me.'

"I thocht she was as sensible as she was bonny, and better natured than baith.

"Weel, I got the house set up, the wedding-day cam, and

everything passed owre as agreeably as onybody could desire. I thocht Tibby turning bonnier and bonnier. For the first five or six days after the weddin, everything was '*hinny*,' and '*my love*,' and '*Tibby, dear*,' or '*Peter, dear*.' But matters didna stand lang at this. It was on a Saturday nicht, I mind, just afore I was gaun to drap work, that three or four acquaintances cam into the shop to wush me joy, and they insisted I should pay off for the weddin. Ye ken I never was behint hand; and I agreed that I wad just fling on my coat and step up wi' them to Orange Lane. So I gaed into the house and took down my market coat, which was hangin behint the bed; and after that I gaed to the kist to tak out a shilling or twa; for, up to that time, Tibby had not usurped the office of Chancellor o' the Exchequer. I did it as cannily as I could; but she had suspected something, and heard the jinkin o' the siller.

"'What are ye doing, Patie?' says she; 'whar are ye gaun?'

"I had never heard her voice hae sic a sound afore, save the first time I drew up to her, when it was rather sharp than agreeable.

"'Ou, my dear,' says I, 'I'm just gaun up to Orange Lane a wee while.'

"'To Orange Lane!' says she; 'what in the name o' fortune's gaun to tak ye there?'

"'O hinny,' says I, 'it's just a neebor lad or twa that's drapped in to wush us joy, and, ye ken, we canna but be neebor-like.'

"'Ay! the sorrow joy them!' says she, 'and neebor too! —an' how meikle will that cost ye?'

"'Hoot, Tibby,' says I, for I was quite astonished at her, 'ye no understand things, woman.'

"'No understand them!' says she; 'I wish to guidness that ye wad understand them though! If that's the way

ye intend to mak the siller flee, it's time there were somebody to tak care o't.'

"I had put the silver in my pocket, and I was gaun to the door mair surprised than I can weel express, when she cried to me—

"'Mind what ye spend, and see that ye dinna stop.'

"'Ye need be under nae apprehensions o' that, hinny,' said I, wishing to pacify her.

"'See that it be sae,' cried she, as I shut the door.

"I joined my neebors in a state of greater uneasiness o' mind than I had experienced for a length o' time. I couldna help thinkin but that Tibby had rather early begun to tak the upper hand, and it was what I never expected from her. However, as I was saying, we went up to Orange Lane, and we sat doun, and ae gill brocht on anither. Tibby's health and mine were drunk; we had several capital sangs; and, I daresay, it was weel on for ten o'clock afore we rose to gang awa. I was nae mair affected wi' drink than I am at this moment. But, somehow or ither, I was uneasy at the idea o' facing Tibby. I thought it would be a terrible thing to quarrel wi' her. I opened the door, and, bolting it after me, slipped in, half on the edge o' my fit. She was sitting wi' her hand at her haffit by the side o' the fire, but she never let on that she either saw or heard me—she didna speak a single word. If ever there was a woman

'Nursing her wrath to keep it warm,'

it was her that nicht. I drew in a chair, and, though I was half-feared to speak—

"'What's the matter, my pet?' says I—'what's happened ye?'

"But she sat looking in to the fire, and never let on she heard me. 'E'en's ye like, Meg Dorts,' thought I, as Allan Ramsay says; but I durstna say it, for I saw that there was a storm brewing. At last, I ventured to say again—

"'What ails ye, Tibby, dear?—are ye no weel?'

"'Weel!' cried she—'wha can be weel? Is this the way ye mean to carry on? What a time o' nicht is this to keep a body to, waiting and fretting on o' ye, their lane? Do you no think shame o' yoursel?'

"'Hoot, woman,' says I, 'I'm surprised at ye; I'm sure ye hae naething to mak a wark about—it's no late yet.'

"'I dinna ken what ye ca' late,' said she; 'it wadna be late amang yer cronies, nae doubt; but if it's no late, it's early, for I warrant its mornin.'

"'Nonsense!' says I.

"'Dinna tell me it's nonsense,' said she, 'for I'll be spoken to in na sic way—I'll let you ken that. But how meikle has it cost ye? Ye wad be treating them, nae doubt—and how meikle hae ye spent, if it be a fair question?'

"'Toots, Tibby!' said I, 'whar's the cause for a' this? What great deal could it cost me?'

"'But hair by hair makes the carle's head bare,' added she—'mind ye that; and mind ye that ye've a house to keep aboon your head noo. But, if ye canna do it, I maun do it for ye—sae gie me the key o' that kist—gie me it instantly; and I'll tak care how ye gang drinkin wi' ony body and treatin them till mornin again.'

"For the sake o' peace I gied her the key; for she was speakin sae loud that I thocht a' the neebors wad hear—and she had nae suner got it, than awa she gaed to the kist and counted every shilling. I had nae great abundance then mair than I've now; and—

"'Is that a' ye hae?' said she; 'an' yet ye'll think o' gaun drinkin and treatin folk frae Saturday nicht till Sabbath mornin! If this is the life ye intend to lead, I wush to guidness I had ne'er had onything to say to ye.'

"'And if this is the life ye intend to lead me,' thought I, 'I wush the same thing.'

"But that was but the beginnin o' my slavery. From

that hour to this she has continued on from bad to worse. No man livin can form an idea o' what I've suffered but mysel. In a mornin, or rather, I may say, in a forenoon, for it was aye nine or ten o'clock afore she got up, she sat doun to her tea and white scones and butter, while I had to be content wi' a scrimpit bicker o' brose and sour milk for kitchen. Nor was this the warst o't; for, when I cam in frae my wark for my breakfast, mornin after mornin, the fire was black out; and there had I, before I could get a bite to put in my mouth, to bend doun upon my knees and blaw it, and blaw it, till I was half-blind wi' ashes—for we hadna a pair o' bellowses; and there wad she lie grumblin a' the time, ca'in me useless *this*, and useless *that;* and I just had to put up wi' it. But, after our first bairn was born, she grew far warse, and I becam mair and mair miserable every day. If I had been sleeping through the nicht, and the bairn had begun a kickin, or whingin—then she was at the scoldin, and I was sure to be started out o' my sleep wi' a great drive atween the shouthers, and her crying—

"'Get up, ye lazy body, ye—get up, and see what's the maiter wi' this bairn.'

"An' this was the trade half-a-dizen o' times in a nicht.

"At last, there was ae day, when a' that I had dune was simply saying a word about the denner no bein ready, and afore ever I kenned whar I was, a cracky-stool that she had bought for the bairn cam fleein across the room, and gied me a dirl on the elbow, that made me think my arm was broken. Ye may guess what a stroke it was, when I tell ye I couldna lift my hand to my head for a week to come. Noo, the like o' that, ye ken, was what mortal man couldna stand.

"'Tibby,' said I, and I looked very desperate and determined, 'what do ye mean by this conduct? By a' that's gracious, I'll no put up wi' it ony langer!'

"'Ye'll no put up wi' it, *ye cratur!*' said she; 'if ye gie me ony mair o' yer provocation, I'll pu' yer lugs for ye—wull ye put up wi' that?'

"It was terrible for a man to hear his ain wife ca' him *a cratur!*—just as if I had been a monkey or a laupdoug!

"'O ye disdainfu' limmer,' thought I; 'but if I could humble your proud spirit, I wad do it!' Weel, there was a grand new ballant hawkin about the country at the time—it was ca'd 'Watty and Meg'—ye have nae doubt seen't. Meg was just such a terrible termagant as my Tibby; and I remembered the perfect reformation that was wrought upon her by Watty's bidding her farweel, and threatenin to list. So it just struck me that I wad tak a leaf out o' the ballant. Therefore, keeping the same serious and determined look, for I was in no humour to seem otherwise—'Tibby, says I, 'there shall be nae mair o' this. But I will gang and list this very day, and ye'll see what will come owre ye then—ye'll maybe repent o' yer conduct whan it's owre late.'

"'List! ye *totum* ye!' said she; 'do ye say *list?*' and she said this in a tone and wi' a look o' derision that gaed through my very soul. 'What squad will ye list into?—what regiment will tak ye? Do ye intend to list for a fifer laddie?' And as she said this, she held up her oxter, as if to tak me below't.

"I thought I wad hae drapped doun wi' indignation. I could hae strucken her, if I durst. Ye observe I am just five feet twa inches and an eighth, upon my stokin-soles. That is rather below the army standard—and I maun say it's a very foolish standard; for a man o' my height stands a better chance to shoot anither than a giant that wad fire owre his head. But she was aware that I was below the mark, and my threat was of no avail; so I had just to slink awa into the shop, rubbin my elbow.

"But the cracky-stool was but the beginnin o' her drivin; there wasna a week after that but she let flee at me what-

ever cam in the way, whenever I by accident crossed her cankered humour. It's a wonder that I'm in the land o' the living; for I've had the skin peeled off my legs—my arms maistly broken—my head cut, and ither parts o' my body a' black and blue, times out o' number. I thought her an angel whan I was courtin her; but, O Robin! she has turned out—I'll no say what—an adder!—a teeger!—a she fury!

"As for askin onybody into the house, it's a thing I durstna do for the life that's in my body. I never did it but ance, and that was whan an auld schulefellow, that had been several years in America, ca'ed at the shop to see me. After we had cracked a while—

"'But I maun see the wife, Patie,' says he.

"Whether he had heard aboot her behaviour or no, I canna tell; but, I assure ye, his request was onything but agreeable to me. However, I took him into the house, and I introduced him wi' fear and tremblin.

"'Tibby, dear,' said I—and I dinna think I had ca'ed her *dear* for ten years afore—'here's Mr W——, an auld schulefellow o' mine, that's come a' the way frae America, an' ca'ed in to see ye.'

"'Ye're aye meetin wi' auld schulefellows, or some set or ither, to tak ye aff yer wark,' muttered she, sulkily, but loud enough for him to hear.

"I was completely at a loss what to do or say next; but, pretending as though I hadna heard her, I said, as familiarly and kindly as I could, though my heart was in a terrible swither—'Bring out the bottle, lass.'

"'Bottle!' quo' she, 'what bottle?—what does the man mean?—has he pairted wi' the little sense that he ever had?' But had ye seen her as she said this!—I've seen a cloud black when driven wi' a hurricane, and I've seen it awfu' when roarin in the agony o' thunder; but never did I see onything that I was mair in fear o' than my wife's face at

that moment. But, somehow or ither, I gathered courage to say—'Hoots, woman, what's the use o' behavin that way? I'm sure ye ken weel aneugh it's the speerit bottle.'

"'The speerit bottle!' cried she, wi' a scream; 'and when was there a speerit bottle within this door? Dinna show yoursel aff to your American freend for a greater man than ye are, Patie. I think, if wi' a' that ye bring in I get meat and bits o' duds for your bairns, I do very weel.'

"This piece o' impudence completely knocked me stupid, for, wad ye believe it, Robin, though she had lang driven a' my freends frae about the house, yet never did ony o' *her* freends ca'—and that was maistly every Sunday, and every Coldstream market-day—but there was the bottle out frae the cupboard, which she aye kept under lock and key; and a dram, and a bit short-bread nae less, was aye and to this day handed round to every ane o' them. They hae discovered that it's worth while to make Patie the bicker-maker's a half-way house. But, if I happen to be in when they ca', though she pours out a fu' glass a-piece for them, she takes aye guid care to stand in afore me when she comes to me, between them and me, so that they canna see what she is doing, or how meikle she pours out; and, I assure ye, it is seldom a thimblefu' that fa's to my share, though she hands the bottle lang up in her hand—mony a time, no a weetin; and again and again have I shoved my head past her side, and said, 'Your health, Mrs So-and-so'—or, 'Yours, Mr Such-a-thing,' wi' no as meikle in my glass as wad droun a midge. Or, if I was sae placed that she durstna but, for shame, fill a glass within half-an-inch o' the tap or sae, she wad gie me a look, or a wink, or mak a motion o' some kind, which weel did I ken the meanin o', and which was the same as saying—'Drink it if ye daur!' O Robin, man! it's weel for ye that no kens what it is to be a footba' at your ain fireside. I daresay, my freend burned at the bane for me; for he got up, and—

"'I wish you good-day, Mr Crichton,' said he; 'I have business in Kelso to-night yet, and can't stop.'

"I was perfectly overpowered wi' shame; but it was a relief to me when he gaed awa—and I slipped out after him, and into the shop again.

"But Tibby's isna the only persecution that I hae to put up wi'; for we hae five bairns, and she's brought them a' up to treat me as she does hersel. If I offer to correct them, they cry out—'I'll tell my mither!'—and frae the auldest to the youngest o' them, when they speak aboot me, it is *he* did this, or *he* did that—they for ever talk o' me as *him! —him!* I never got the name o' *faither* frae ane o' them —and it's a' her doings. Now, I just ask ye simply if ony faither would put up wi' the like o' that! But I maun put up wi't. If I were offering to lay hands upon them for't, I am sure and persuaded she wad raise a' Birgham about me —my life wadna be safe where she is—but, indeed, I needna say that, for it never is.

"But there is ae thing that grieves me beyond a' that I hae mentioned to ye. Ye ken my mither, puir auld body, is a widow now. She is in the seventy-sixth year o' her age, and very frail. She has naebody to look after her but me—naebody that has a natural right to do it; for I never had ony brothers, as ye ken; and, as for my twa sisters, I daresay they have just a sair aneugh fecht wi' their ain families, and as they are at a distance, I dinna ken how they are situated wi' their guidmen—though I maun say for them, they send her a stane o' oatmeal, an ounce o' tobacco, or a pickle tea and sugar, now and then, which is very likely as often as they hae it in their power; and that is a great deal mair than I'm *allowed* to do for her—me that has a right to protect and maintain her. A' that she has to support her is fifteenpence a-week aff the parish o' Mertoun. O Robin, man!—Robin, man!—my heart rugs within me, when I talk to you about this. A' that I hae endured is

naething to it! To see my puir auld mither in a state o' starvation, and no to be allowed to gie her a saxpence! O Robin, man!—Robin, man!—is it no awfu'? When she was first left destitute, and a widow, I tried to break the maiter to Tibby, and to reason wi' her.

"'O Tibby, woman!' said I, 'I'm very distressed. Here's my faither laid in the grave, and I dinna see what's to come o' my mither, puir body—she is auld, and she is frail—she has naebody to look after or provide for her but me.'

"'You!' cried Tibby—'you! I wush ye wad mind what ye are talkin about! Ye have as many dougs, I can tell ye, as ye hae banes to pike! Let your mither do as ither widows hae done afore her—let the parish look after her.'

"'O Tibby, woman!' said I; 'but if ye'll only consider—the parish money is very sma', and, puir body, it will mak her heart sair to receive a penny o't; for she weel kens that my faither would rather hae dee'd in a ditch than been behauden to either a parish or an individual for a saxpence.'

"'An' meikle they hae made by their pride,' said Tibby. 'I wush ye wud haud your tongue.'

"'Ay, but Tibby,' says I, for I was nettled mair than I durst show it, 'but she has been a guid mother to me, and ye ken yoursel that she's no been an ill *guid-mother* to ye. She never stood in the way o' you an' me comin thegither, though I was paying six shillings a-week into the house.'

"'And what am I obliged to her for that?' interrupted my Jezebel.

"'I dinna ken, Tibby,' says I; 'but it's a hard thing for a son to see a mother in want, when he can assist her. Now, it isna meikle she takes—she never was used wi' dainties; and, if I may just tak her hame, little will serve her, and her meat will ne'er be missed.'

"'Ye born idiot!' cried Tibby. 'I aye thought ye a fule—but ye are warse than a fule! Bring your mither here!

An auld, crossgrained, faut-finding wife, that I ne'er could hae patience to endure for ten minutes in my days! Bring her here, say ye! No! while I live in this house, I'll let ye ken that I'll be *mistress*.'

"Ay, and maister too, thought I. I found it was o' nae use to argue wi' her. There was nae possibility o' gettin my mither into the house; and as to assisting her wi' a shillin or twa at a time by chance, or paying her house rent, or sending her a load o' coals, it was perfectly out o' the question, and beyond my power. Frae the nicht that I went to Orange Lane to this moment, I hae never had a saxpence under my thumb that I could ca' my ain. Indeed, I never hae money in my hands, unless it be on a day like this, when I hae to gang to a fair, or the like o' that; and even then, before I start, her leddyship sees every bowie, bicker, and piggin, that gangs into the cart—she kens the price o' them as weel as I do; and if I shouldna bring hame either money or goods according to her valuation, I actually believe she wad murder me. There is nae cheatin her. It is by mere chance that, having had a guid market, I've outreached her the day by a shillin or twa; and ane o' them I'll spend wi' you, Robin, and the rest shall gang to my mither. O man! ye may bless your stars that ye dinna ken what it is to hae a termagant wife."

"I am sorry for ye, Patie," said Robin Roughead; "but really I think, in a great measure, ye hae yoursel to blame for it a'!"

"Me!" said Patie—"what do ye mean, Robin?'

"Why, Patie," said Robin, "I ken it is said that every ane can rule a bad wife but he that has her—and I believe it is true. I am quite convinced that naebody kens sae weel where the shoe pinches as they that hae it on; though I am quite satisfied that, had my case been yours, I wad hae brought her to her senses long afore now, though I had

'Dauded her lugs wi' Rab Roryson's bannet.'

or gien her a *hoopin* like your friend the cooper o' Coldingham."

"Save us, man!" said Patie, who loved a joke, even though at second-hand, and at his own expense; "but ye see the cooper's case is not in point, though I am in the same line; for, as I hae observed, I am only five feet twa inches and an eighth in height—my wife *is not the weaker vessel*—that I ken to my sorrow."

"Weel, Patie," said Robin, "I wadna hae ye to lift your hand—I was but jokin upon that score, it wadna be manly; —but there is ae thing that ye can do, and I am sure it wad hae an excellent effect."

"Dearsake! what is that?" cried Patie.

"For a' that has happened ye," said Robin, "ye hae just yoursel to blame, for gieln up the key and the siller to her management that nicht ye gaed to Orange Lane. That is the short and the lang o' a' your troubles, Patie."

"Do you think sae?" inquired the little bicker-maker.

"Yes, I think sae, Peter, and I say it," said Robin; "and there is but ae remedy left."

"And what is that!" asked Patie, eagerly.

"Just this," said Robin—"*stop the supplies.*"

"*Stop the supplies!*" returned Patie—"What do you mean, Robin? I canna say that I fully comprehend ye."

"I just mean this," added the other; "be your ain banker —your ain cashier—be maister o' your ain siller—let her find that it is to you she is indebted for every penny she has the power to spend; and if ye dinna bring Tibby to reason and kindness within a month, my name's no Robin Roughead."

"Do ye think that wad do it?" said Patie.

"If that wadna, naething wad," answered Robin; "but try it for a twelvemonth—begin this very nicht; and if we baith live and be spared to this time next year, I'll meet ye again, and I'll be the death o' a mutchkin, but that ye

tell me Tibby's a different woman—your bairns different—your hail house different—and your auld mither comfortable."

"O man, if it might be sae," said Patie; "but this very nicht, the moment I get hame, I'll try it—and, if I succeed, I'll try ye wi' a bottle o' wine, and I believe I never drank ane in my life."

"Agreed," said Robin; "but mind ye're no to do things by halves. Ye're no to be feared out o' your resolution because Tibby may fire and storm, and let drive the things in the house at ye—nor even though she should greet."

"I thoroughly understand ye," said Patie; "my resolution's ta'en, and I'll stand by it."

"Gie's your hand on't," said Robin; and Patie gave him his hand.

Now the two friends parted, and it is unnecessary for me either to describe their parting, or the reception which Patie, on his arriving at Birgham, met with from his spouse.

Twelve months went round, Dunse fair came again, and after the fair was over, Patie Crichton once more went in quest of his old friend, Robin Roughead. He found him standing in the horse market, and—

"How's a' wi' ye, my freend?" says Patie.

"Oh, hearty, hearty," cries the other; "but how's a' wi' ye?—how is yer family?"

"Come and get the bottle o' wine that I've to gie ye," said Patie, "and I'll tell ye a' about it."

"I'll do that," said Robin, "for my business is dune."

So they went into the same house in the Castle Wynd where they had been twelve months before, and Patie called for a bottle of wine; but he found that the house had not the wine license, and was therefore content with a gill of whisky made into toddy.

"O man," said he to Robin, "I wad pay ye half a dizen bottles o' wine wi' as great cheerfu'ness as I raise this glass

to my lips. It was a grand advice that o' yours—*stop the supplies.*"

"I am glad to hear it," said Robin; "I was sure it was the only thing that would do."

"Ye shall hear a' about it," said Patie. "After parting wi' ye, I trudged hame to Birgham, and when I got to my house—before I had the sneck o' the door weel out o' my hand—

"'What's stopped ye to this time o' nicht, ye fitless, feckless cratur ye?' cried Tibby—'whar hae ye been? Gie an account o' yoursel.'

"'An account o' mysel!' says I, and I gied the door a drive ahint me, as if I wad driven it aff the hinges—'for what should I gie an account o' mysel?—or wha should I gie it to? I suppose this house is my ain, and I can come in and gang out when I like!'

"'Yours!' cried she; 'is the *body* drunk?'

"'No,' says I; 'I'm no drunk, but I wad hae you to be decent. Where is my supper?—it is time that I had it.'

"'Ye micht hae come in in time to get it then,' said she; 'folk canna keep suppers waitin on you.'

"'But I'll gang whar I can get it,' said I; and I offered to leave the house.

"'I'll tak the life o' ye first,' said she. 'Gie me the siller. Ye had five cogs, a dizen o' bickers, twa dizen o' piggins, three bowies, four cream dishes, and twa ladles, besides the wooden spoons that I packed up mysel. Gie me the siller—and, you puir profligate, let me see what ye hae spent.'

"'Gie you the siller!' says I; 'na, na, I've dune that lang aneugh—*I hae stopped the supplies*, my woman.'

"'Stop your breath!' cried she; 'gie me the siller, every farthin, or wo betide ye.'

"It was needless for her to say *every farthin;* for, had I dune as I used to do, I kenned she wad search through

every pocket o' my claes the moment she thocht me asleep —through every hole and corner o' them, to see if I had cheated her out o' a single penny—ay, and tak them up, and shake them, and shake them, after a' was dune. But I was determined to stand fast by your advice.

"'Do as ye like,' says I; 'I'll bring ye to your senses—*I've stopped the supplies.*'

"She saw that I wasna drunk, and my manner rather dumfoundered her a little. The bairns—wha, as I have tauld ye, she aye encouraged to mock me—began to giggle at me, and to mak game o' me, as usual. I banged out o' the house, and into the shop, and I took down the belt o' the bit turning-lathe, and into the house I goes again wi' it in my hand.

"'Wha maks a fule o' me now?'

"And they a' laughed thegither, and I up wi' the belt, and I loundered them round the house and round the house, till ane screamed and anither screamed, and even their mither got clouts in trying to run betwixt them and me; and it was wha to squeel loudest. Sae, after I had brocht them a' to ken what I was, I awa yont to my mither's, and I gied her five shillins, puir body; and after stoppin an hour wi' her, I gaed back to the house again. The bairns were a' abed, and some o' them were still sobbin, and Tibby was sittin by the fire; but she didna venture to say a word —I had completely astonished her—and as little said I.

"There wasna a word passed between us for three days; I was beginning to carry my head higher in the house, and on the fourth day I observed that she had nae tea to her breakfast. A day or twa after, the auldest lassie cam to me ae morning about ten o'clock, and says she—

"'Faither, I want siller for tea and sugar.'

"'Gae back to them that sent ye,' says I, 'and tell them to fare as I do, and they'll save the tea and sugar."

"But it is of nae use dwellin upon the subject. I did stop

the supplies most effectually. I very soon brocht Tibby to ken wha was her bread-winner. An' when I saw that my object was accomplished, I showed mair kindness and affection to her than ever I had dune. The bairns became as obedient as lambs, and she soon came to say—'Peter, should I do this thing?'—or, 'Peter, should I do that thing?' So, when I had brocht her that far—'Tibby,' says I, 'we hae a but and a ben, and it's grievin me to see my auld mither starvin, and left by hersel wi' naebody to look after her. I think I'll bring her hame the morn—she'll aye be o' use about the house—she'll can knit the bairns' stockins, or darn them when they are out o' the heels.'

"'Weel, Peter,' said Tibby, 'I'm sure it's as little as a son can do, and I'm perfectly agreeable.'

"I banged up—I flung my arms round Tibby's neck—'Oh! bless ye, my dear!' says I; 'bless ye fôr that!—there's the key o' the kist and the siller—ffom this time henceforth do wi' it what ye like.'

"Tibby grat. My mother cam hame to my house the next day. Tibby did everything to mak her comfortable—a' the bairns ran at her bidden—and, frae that day to this, there isna a happier man on this wide world than Patie Crichton the bicker-maker o' Birgham."

MORTLAKE.—A LEGEND OF MERTON.

"PRAY, sir, will you condescend to inform me by what title you presume to set your foot on my grounds? Have I not already warned you; and if I use you now severely, the blame must rest with yourself."

These words were addressed by Sir Thomas Bruce Vavasour, in an evident state of excitement, to a young lad apparently of about nineteen, but in reality not much above sixteen, whom he met traversing the grounds of Merton. Tom Vallance did not condescend to inform his interrogator why he had presumed to intrude where his presence seemed far from welcome, or explain why, on the present occasion, he happened to have in his hand a gun, which suspicious folks might be apt to suppose was intended to create some little confusion among the game on this well-preserved estate. He returned no very distinct answer; but some inarticulate sounds issued from his mouth, which, no doubt, were intended to deprecate the rage of the hasty and irritable baronet; but which seemed to have the effect only of heightening his ire, as he turned round to his keeper, who, with one of the servants, was at his back, and bade them secure the fowling-piece with which the youth was furnished—a command which was instantly obeyed; and the lad, not prepared for the sudden attack, was without difficulty disarmed.

"Now, my lad," quoth Sir Thomas, "you had better be off, unless you wish me to use violence; for I will not allow my property to be trespassed upon, and my game destroyed, by you and the like of you."

Tom stood firm, scowling on the baronet. At length he gained nerve enough to say—

"Give me back my gun. You have no right to rob me, nor shall you."

"But you shall submit, my little cock-sparrow. Don't suppose I want to keep your twopenny-halfpenny pop-gun. Here, John, just take Master Tom by the shoulders, and turn him off my grounds; and you, Peter, carry this rubbishy thing to Mrs Vallance, and tell her it would better become her to keep her son behind the counter of her shop, to serve her customers with farthing-candles and brown soap, than allow him to vagabondise about the country poaching. If he does not mend his manners, I've a pretty good guess that some of those days he'll either take a voyage at the expense of his country, or get his neck thrust into a noose."

This was certainly impertinent. It was, moreover, unjust and uncalled for; as, whatever might be said to the charge of Tom Vallance, on account of his predilection for field sports, no impeachment lay otherwise to his moral character. But Sir Thomas was in a passion; and, like all persons in that state, spoke without reflection. Naturally of a hasty and irritable temper, he had received a letter that morning which excited his ire excessively, and as, upon issuing from the mansion, the lad Vallance crossed his path, the first burst of his wrath fell on his devoted head. Tom felt deeply the insult. He had been accustomed to a shake of the head, and sometimes a sharp word; but Sir Thomas, upon the whole, used him well enough; for, as his mother had been housekeeper in the family during the lifetime of Sir Marmaduke Vavasour, who had married the heiress of Merton, the lad was looked upon, or rather he looked upon himself, as a sort of licensed person on the grounds. To be deprived of his gun was bad, but to insinuate moral turpitude was worse; and, forgetful of the rank of his tormentor, he exclaimed—

"I am no thief—I am as honest as yourself, Sir Thomas! and bitterly, bitterly shall you rue this day! When I set my foot next time on your grounds, it will be for no good to you."

Saying this, he turned on his heel, and, extricating himself suddenly from the hands of the servants, cleared a ditch which opposed his retreat, and was speedily out of reach.

The passion of Sir Thomas was not lessened by this unexpected reply, followed as it was by the speedy evasion of the speaker; and, as Tom was out of his reach, he transferred his wrath to the attendants, who were scolded in the most exemplary style for not knocking the young rascal down. After indulging some time in this agreeable relaxation, he returned to the house, looking all the while, as his men said, "like a bear wi' a sair head."

Sir Thomas Bruce Vavasour was the third son of an English baronet of ancient lineage, who, by intermarriage with Isabella, daughter, and afterwards sole heiress, of Reginald Bruce of Merton, in the County of Roxburgh, eventually carried that estate into his family. He had three brothers, two elder and one younger than himself. By the marriage contract, the English estate, which was considerable, was destined to the elder son, the Scottish one to the second son. Thomas got a commission, went abroad, and, after much battling about, attained the rank of general, when, by the death of his brother William, he succeeded to Merton; and a few years afterwards, the demise of the eldest brother, who broke his neck whilst fox-hunting, gave him the extensive manor of Vavasour Castle, and the title of a baronet. The younger brother married an heiress, by whom he had one son, whom, after his demise, he left under the guardianship of Sir Thomas—excluding Mrs Vavasour from all control. The uncle carefully superintended the education of his ward—became much attached to him—

and, during the holidays, frequently took him to Merton, to the infinite displeasure of Mrs Richard Vavasour, who cordially hated her brother-in-law. When he grew up, those visits were discontinued, partly as he was studying for the bar, and partly to please his mother, whom he considered he was in duty bound to propitiate as much as he could—rather a difficult task, as she was a capricious, fine lady, with violent and vindictive feelings. Edward was about four-and-twenty, and had formed an attachment to a lady—his equal in birth and fortune—but who did not meet with the mother's approbation. She demanded that the match should be broken off—Edward remonstrated—she persisted; and, after a war of words, matters remained precisely as they originally were: he avowing a fixed determination to make himself happy, notwithstanding Mrs Vavasour's threats of vengeance. This he accordingly did; and his mother, bursting a blood-vessel, soon afterwards died, leaving a sealed letter to be sent, after her demise, to Sir Thomas, whom she hated.

Three weeks had elapsed from the date of this interview, when, one evening early in the month of September, a party of farmers (for it was market-day) were sitting, after dinner, in the public inn of the county town, when the landlord suddenly entered, exclaiming—

"Gracious! a dreadful murder has just been committed, The Laird of Merton has been killed in his own house!"

This announcement was received with equal astonishment and horror by those assembled; and the intruder had every possible question to answer as to the time, place, and person, that the half-muddled brains of those present could devise; and such a Babel of voices arose in sweet discord, that a gentleman, who sat in the parlour alone, and who had arrived by that day's mail, was so much disturbed as to ring violently, to know why his meditations were thus so unharmoniously interrupted.

"Waiter," said he, "why this disturbance? Cannot your farmers dine here without kicking up a riot?"

"Oh, sir, it's the murder!"

"What murder?"

"The General, sir, who lives at Merton, sir, found stabbed in his own sitting-room, sir!"

"Stabbed, do you say? It cannot be!"

"Quite true, sir, as I'm a waiter! And they have got the murderer in custody."

"Murderer! impossible! What mean you?" exclaimed the traveller, hastily.

"Why, sir, the fellow that killed Sir Thomas is taken redhand, I think they call it."

"Who is he?"

"Just Tom Vallance, sir—an idle fellow, to be sure, but the last person that I would have thought would do such a thing."

"What! the son of the old housekeeper?"

"Yes. Do you know him, sir?"

"Not I; but I've heard of his mother. What inducement could he have to commit so dreadful a crime?"

"Revenge, sir! The General, some two or three weeks since, seized his gun, and, poor gentleman, abused Tom fearfully, for he was in one of his terrifics; and Tom told him the next time he was on his grounds he would do for him—at least so it is said."

"Dreadful! And what was this Tom Vallance, as I think you call him?"

"Nothing, sir. His mother is an industrious woman; and the lad was not that bad fellow neither—but dreadfully idle. He had a good education; but his father dying two years since, Tom left school; and his mother, in place of sending him back, kept him at home. She was so fond of him that she let him do whatever he liked."

"How can she afford to maintain him?"

"She is very industrious, sir; and, as she was daft fond of him, every penny she could scrape together went into his pockets."

"Where is the accused?"

"Tom, sir, do you mean? Why, before the sheriff, making his declaration."

"Who succeeds the late baronet?"

"His nephew—a very nice chap. He was often at Merton when a lad; but he has not been here for many years. He'll be better liked than his uncle, though the old fellow was not so bad neither. But I must go, sir, for I hear the bell ringing in the travellers'-room."

So saying, he whipped his napkin under his arm, and withdrew with praiseworthy celerity.

The unknown traveller paced slowly up and down the room, apparently very much perplexed in his mind. He muttered—

"Strange!—very strange!—caught in the room—a previous threat—all concurs."

Shortly afterwards he again rang the bell, ordered in and paid his bill; and, taking a post-chaise to the next town, waited there only until the mail from Edinburgh to London stopped to change horses, and, having procured a seat, arrived in due time in the metropolis.

The investigation of facts connected with the death of Sir Thomas proceeded, and a strong case was made out against the accused. The two servants swore to the threat; and, although not giving exactly the waiter's version of it, made it pretty nearly as bad; for, not having heard the precise words, they supplied the defect in hearing by generalising. "He threatened," they said, "to be revenged, and that he would come to the grounds for that purpose;" or used some such words, showing a determined resolution of getting "*amends*" of their master. That the General met his death by a stab in the heart was plain enough;

and that the servants found Tom beside him, grasping a bloody knife, was equally so. Presumptions were, therefore, strongly against him; nor did his declaration or judicial statement help him much; for he admitted, after some little hesitation, that he had slipped into the grounds to redeem his threat of revenge by carrying off some very fine peaches, of which the General was very proud, and which he intended as a present to a neighbouring friend. Knowing that Sir Thomas was accustomed to take his *siesta* immediately after dinner, which was usually at five—for he followed a fashion of his own in this respect, which has, since his time, become popular—and that the gardener left at six, he lurked about the grounds till after that period, and then, easily getting into the garden, thought it prudent to see how the land lay before he proceeded to his labour of love.

The house of Merton was an old-fashioned building; or rather series of buildings erected at different times; and the present possessor, who had a fancy for horticulture, had added an apartment, which opened by a glass-door upon a terrace, from which, by descending a few steps, he entered the garden. This room was, necessarily, remote from the rest of the mansion, and here Sir Thomas uniformly dined, summer and winter. After dinner was removed, and the dessert and wine placed on the table, the servants withdrew, and were forbidden to enter till seven o'clock, when coffee was served. Of all this Tom was perfectly cognisant.

Now Tom asserted that, as a precautionary measure, he resolved to peep into the room in question, to ascertain whether Sir Thomas was asleep before he took his boyish revenge; and seeing the glass-door which led into the garden open, he proceeded, cautiously and slowly, till he got there, when, looking in, he observed his old enemy lying on the floor on his face. Astonished at this, and forgetting all

sense of personal risk, he advanced to raise the baronet, when he discovered that he was dead, and a knife lying beside the body, which he picked up. Fear tied up his tongue for some few seconds, and he had barely time to give utterance to an exclamation of horror, when, the door opening, the servant gave the alarm, and before he had time to collect his scattered senses he was a prisoner. All this might have been true, and perhaps the story would have been treated with more consideration than it obtained, had it not been for the *previous threat*, which naturally induced a strong suspicion against Tom. The result was, that, after the ordinary form had been gone through, the unhappy youth was fully committed to take his trial for the murder of Sir Thomas Vavasour Bruce Vavasour of Vavasour and Merton, Baronet.

The heir, at this eventful period, was in England, whither the body was transmitted, and deposited in the Vavasour mausoleum.

Meanwhile Tom remained for some weeks in the county jail, in a condition far from enviable. All attempts to induce a confession of guilt were abortive; he persisted in his declaration of innocence; but, as parties accused are not usually in the habit of confessing their crimes, these protestations were not considered worth much. Indeed, the only person he could convince was his poor mother, who gave implicit confidence to his assertions.

A change, and one for the better, had come over the accused in prison. How bitterly did he regret his former idle moments—how deeply did he lament the burden he had been on his mother! Many a vow did he make, that, if he could get quit of this charge, he would eschew his former course of life, and be all a fond parent could ask. About the tenth day before the approaching sittings, Tom was visited by a gentleman, who proffered his assistance as his adviser. He had heard, he said, of the case, and was

anxious, on his mother's account, to afford his aid; but he required a full and ample statement, without any concealment. Tom answered, he had nothing to conceal; and he recapitulated everything he had formerly stated.

The stranger listened attentively, and, after his client had concluded, shook his head. "Tom, you may be innocent—there is the impress of truth in what you state, and I can hardly doubt you; but still the evidence against you is so strong, that, if you go to trial, I am fearful—very fearful of the result."

Tom's face, which had brightened as the stranger commenced, became clouded ere the remarks were finished, and when they terminated he burst into tears. "Oh, sir!" he sobbed, "have pity on a poor misguided lad, who never meant evil to any one—who is as innocent of the crime of which he is accused as you are. Save me, sir—oh, save me! if not on my own account, at least on that of my poor mother, who will break her heart if I am condemned!"

"I would willingly save you if I could," was the rejoinder; "but I cannot influence juries—I cannot sway the court."

"And must I die, then? Must I, before my time, go down to my grave dishonoured and disgraced? Oh, sir, if it had pleased Heaven to visit me with a deadly sickness, I would have left the world without one sigh except for my mother! But to be degraded as a felon—to be branded as a murderer—it is too—too much!" He became so agitated that grief choked his utterance.

The stranger, obviously affected, took his hand. "Tom, have you firmness? There is a way, perhaps."

"How?" exclaimed the lad, eagerly.

"This room is only one storey from the ground, and escape is possible."

"Escape! No, no! The windows are barred with iron; besides, if I escape, it looks like guilt, and I cannot bear that."

"But will staying behind prove your innocence? Will your suffering the last penalty of the law convince the world that you did not commit the murder?"

"True—very true! If I live, my innocence may yet be proved. But how to get through the window?"

"That can be easily managed, if you will act like a man. It is now early. I will be with you again before the prison shuts. Remember, not one word to your mother. You may console her by saying that your agent—for such I am—has given you hopes. Nothing more. Remember!" So saying, he departed, leaving Tom to meditate upon this extraordinary expedient.

It was rather late when the stranger, who called himself Mortlake, returned. Tom had kept his promise, and, by affording his mother hopes of an acquittal, contrived to infuse a happiness to which her bosom had been for many a week a stranger.

"Now, Tom!" said Mr Mortlake, in a low tone, "attend to me. I have brought you a file, some aquafortis, and a silken ladder. Apply the liquid to the bars, and it will gradually eat into the iron—then use your file, and the first impediment to your flight will be removed. Next fix the silken ladder firmly, and your descent is easy. Do not begin your operations until the inmates of the jail are asleep. You may get everything ready by the evening of the day after the morrow. As the clock strikes twelve, assistance will be at hand, and descend with the first stroke, if all is right. Some one will be waiting for you. He will whisper into your ear 'follow,' and you must follow as speedily as possible. But, again, I caution you to keep this a secret from your mother. Buoy her up with hopes; talk confidently of your acquittal; that you are to have a learned barrister from Edinburgh. This will get wind, and prevent any suspicion of your intended escape. Once safe, your mother will receive due notice; and be assured she shall not be allowed to

suffer one moment more of suspense than is absolutely necessary. You will not see me again in prison, I hope."

Tom's feelings were overcome. He seized Mortlake's hand, and pressed it to his lips, while tears flowed in torrents from his eyes. He could not speak.

Mortlake was affected. "And yet, poor kind-hearted boy," he said, "people could deem you guilty of a murder. How little did they know you! But away with tears. Be a man. You have a difficult part before you. See you flinch not!" Then changing his tone, and speaking loudly, "Well! I'm off to Edinburgh, where I shall see Andrew Crosbie. I have great faith in him; and, as he is not a greedy man, I daresay, Tom, I may get him to come here."

At this moment the jailer entered, saying it was time to leave; and Mortlake, pressing Tom's hand, bade him farewell, until his return from Edinburgh.

Tom treasured every word in his heart—not one syllable escaped his lips, that might induce the most suspicious person to imagine he contemplated flight. He spoke sensibly of his case; inducing his mother, and one or two persons whom curiosity had prompted to visit him, to suppose that he was very sanguine of acquittal; and, as the fame of Andrew Crosbie extended over Scotland as a shrewd man and an able lawyer, this result was not thought by any means chimerical.

When the evening came, Tom commenced operations. He applied the liquid as directed, which soon corroded the iron at the bottom. The sides and tops were more difficult, but their partial destruction was in time accomplished; and, when the eventful evening came, he had little difficulty in removing the grating. It was, of course, only injured at the ends; and, as the window was oblong, by altering the position of the grating, he obtained a substance sufficiently strong to which he attached the rope-ladder. Getting up to the window, he placed the grating reversed in the inside, and threw

the ladder on the outside. To soften the fall of the iron after he had descended, he placed his mattress and bedclothes below; and having thus made every preliminary arrangement, with the first stroke of twelve he commenced his descent; and, ere the last had died upon the breeze, the ground was reached in safety.

A figure, enveloped in a cloak, approached hurriedly, and whispered, "follow!" He tossed a bundle to the fugitive, then turned to the left. The order was obeyed; and, after the lapse of an hour and a-half, Tom found himself in a wood, and the stranger, opening a dark lantern—sliding shades at the side of which had previously been pulled down—disclosed to the eyes of Vallance the features of his agent, Mortlake.

The bundle was untied, and Tom found it to contain a capacious wrapper, a shawl, and bonnet with a veil. Those Tom was required to put on, and this matter being accomplished, the journey was resumed, and in about two hours they arrived at a small hamlet or village, where they found a gig waiting for them. Mortlake then addressed his companion:—"My dear Emily! be more composed—never mind your father—I will write to him, and all will yet be put to rights."

Tom, who had been previously instructed, spoke "small like a woman;" and, after some affected coyness, entered the carriage, when the parties drove off, leaving the man who had taken charge of the vehicle under the evident conviction that the strange man was a sad blackguard, and that the veiled lady was some unfortunate young woman who had been deluded away by his devices.

The news of Tom's escape excited universal astonishment, and no means were left untried to trace his footsteps; but every exertion was in vain, and his pursuers were completely at fault. It was universally admitted that some one must have furnished him with the implements that had procured his liberation; and his mother was, as a matter of course,

the first one on whom suspicion lighted. The poor old woman, when the fact was announced, was equally amazed and pleased; but she could furnish no clue. Tom had seen a few people in prison, yet it was evident they had nothing to do with the escape. It was at last resolved that the agent was the accessory; but here the good people were at fault again, for no one, except the jailer, remembered having seen him, and he could give but a very imperfect description of him. He might be tall or so—rather think he was, but not sure—wore powder, and had, he believes, a black coat, but did not think he would know him again. This was all that could be elicited.

A reward of fifty pounds was offered by the magistrates for the capture of Tom; and Sir Edward Bruce Vavasour increased it to one hundred and fifty, expressing, at the same time, his anxiety that the accused should be retaken.

Whilst all were in a state of excitement, fresh fuel was added to the flame by the following letter, bearing the Liverpool post-mark, which Mrs Vallance received from her son:—

"Dearest Mother,—I am well, and as happy as one unjustly accused can be. Though fate has sundered us, you are ever in my thoughts. I have found a protector—fear not for me. You shall regularly hear from

"Your affectionate son," &c.

Beneath was written:—"Your son will be yet a blessing to you. Accept this trifle." And a twenty-pound-note was found enclosed.

"What a fool!" said the wise ones; "only to think of letting us know where he is." And, upon the hint, away trotted the officers with a criminal warrant, to be backed, as it is termed, by an English Justice in Liverpool, where, to their great vexation, he was not to be found.

Meanwhile, the object of their pursuit was out of all danger. His friend and he at last found themselves on the road to Wooler.

"Tom!" said Mortlake, when they alighted at the inn, "you must pass for my wife. I have everything provided for that purpose in my portmanteau; meanwhile, keep down your veil, and wrap your cloak about you."

He then took out a complete suit of female apparel, and speedily his protegé was metamorphosed into a tall and handsome, although somewhat masculine, female. We need not tire our readers with a detail of the subsequent journey southward, and may only mention that Mortlake left the horse and gig at Wooler, where, obtaining a seat for himself and his companion in the mail, they arrived in safety at Barnet. Here Tom resumed his sex; and, in a new suit of clothes, appeared, as he really was, a good and intelligent-looking young man.

From Barnet, the travellers proceeded in a chaise to London, where Mortlake took lodgings, and, after the lapse of a few days, disclosed to the youth his ulterior purposes.

"Mr Vallance ——" said he.

"Do not call me 'Mr.' If you do, I shall think I have offended you."

"Well, Tom, then. Listen to what I have to say. You have been my companion now for nearly three weeks. During that time I have studied you, and the opinion I have formed is favourable. You possess good qualities and excellent talents: these have been obscured, but not extinguished, by your recent follies—not to give them a harsher name. By giving way to passion, and using threats, which, from you, were ill judged and ill timed, you have barely escaped an ignominious death. Far be it from me to say that the late owner of Merton was justified in the intemperate language he used; but you know that at times he had no control over himself, and you should have made allowances for what was really a disease. Of your innocence I have not the slightest doubt, otherwise I would never have aided your escape from jail. I think the lesson

you have had is one you can never forget; and I prophesy that Thomas Vallance may yet assume that position in society which good conduct and perseverance ever secure."

Tom heard this eulogium, qualified as it was, with great delight. "Try me! oh, try me, my best friend! Give me an opportunity of evincing, by the propriety of my conduct, how much I feel your benevolence! To please you shall be the study of my future life."

"Well, Tom, you shall have a trial. But you must leave me, and cross the seas. It is not safe for either of us that you remain here."

Tom's countenance fell. "And must I leave *you*—the only being in the world, save my mother, whom I love? But your commands are to me as laws, and they shall be obeyed."

"Well, then, the family with which I am connected has large possessions in Antigua, and there is a wealthy mercantile establishment over which I have no inconsiderable control—so much so, that any recommendation from me or mine will meet with immediate attention. I shall place you there as a clerk, and if you discharge the duties of the office satisfactorily, means shall be afforded of advancing you: in one word, everything shall be made to depend upon your good behaviour. Preparations have already been making for your departure, and I have procured from the senior partner of Mortlake, Tresham, & Co., an order for your appointment, with a letter of recommendation to Mr Tresham, the resident partner, whose good graces I sincerely wish you may acquire."

"Mortlake—is he a relation of yours?'

"Yes; but you must ask no questions—seek to know nothing beyond what I choose to disclose. You must renounce your name. You will therefore, in future, be known as Thomas Mortlake, the son of a distant relation of mine. Such is the legend that must be circulated. Now, write to

your mother. Would to heaven I could permit an interview! but that cannot be. Give me the letter, sealed if you choose, as I have a particular mode of transmitting it to her, and I wish it to appear, as the former one did, that it came from Liverpool. Be cautious and guarded in what you communicate; but mention that, in future, she shall have such an allowance as will make her easy for life. Now, farewell for a few hours, and be sure to have your letter ready when I return."

Tom was left to his own reflections. The letter to Mrs Vallance was written; and, by the time that Mortlake returned, Tom was sufficiently composed to veil his feelings, and meet him as of old.

"Everything is arranged," said Mortlake. "In a few days you sail from the Thames by the brig Tresham. You will have every accommodation afforded that a gentleman can require; a suitable wardrobe is preparing; in short, my dear young friend, you shall appear to these West Indians as their equal, and in such guise as suits the proud name of Mortlake. One thing more, and I have done. The present Baronet of Vavasour has, through his mother, property in Antigua, and is distantly related to the elder partner of the firm. You will, therefore, seem as if you knew him not; and, even in regard to myself, I wish little or nothing said. That curiosity will be excited, I doubt not, but I leave you to baffle it."

Time passed with unusual rapidity—so, at least, Mr Thomas Mortlake opined; and the day of his departure having at length arrived, he was not a little startled when his friend made a very early appearance, accompanied by a young lady. Advancing towards him, she said—"Mr Mortlake! I am happy to have had this opportunity of seeing you previous to your departure, and of personally wishing you every success in the calling in which you are about to engage. Your friend has no secrets from me,

and I am acquainted with every particular of your singular history."

"Yes!" exclaimed his protector; "I conceal nothing from this lady, and she feels as much interest in you as I do myself. We propose to accompany you to the ship."

Tom felt somewhat confused by this unexpected introduction; but that natural sense of propriety which is inherent in some minds, and which others vainly endeavour to obtain, enabled him to acquit himself in a manner that gave equal satisfaction to both visiters. The party then proceeded to the vessel, where Mortlake and the lady satisfied themselves that due provision had been made for the accommodation of their protegé.

"Mr Mortlake!" said the lady at parting, "I have used the freedom of an old friend, and placed in your cabin a small collection of books, which, I have no doubt, will materially help to deprive your voyage of half its tedium; and, when you arrive at the place of your destination, if you could devote any leisure hours to their study, be assured the benefit will be incalculable."

"Believe me," he answered, "my kind patrons, whatever may be my fate, I never can forget the wondrous acts of kindness that have been lavished on me. If an anxious desire to discharge the duties of my office—if a determination to surmount difficulties, coupled with a firm resolution to act fairly and honourably by my neighbours—can be taken as an earnest of my anxiety to please, on this you may rely; and, if my exertions be crowned with success, the pleasure will be doubled when I remember it is all owing to you."

"Tom," said Mr Mortlake, "you are eloquent; but time flies, and we must part."

"I have but one request more—no doubt it is needless. Be kind! oh be kind to my poor mother!"

"On that," replied the lady, "you may depend. And now, farewell!"

Tom took her hand, and pressed it respectfully to his lips; then, turning to his friend, tried to give utterance to "farewell!" The word would not pass his lips; forgetting all difference of rank, he threw his arms around Mortlake's neck, and wept. In a moment, as if ashamed of his freedom or want of manliness, he hastily withdrew from his embrace.

Mortlake was moved. He pressed the lad affectionately to his breast—"God bless you, my dear fellow; in me you have ever a steady friend. And now, farewell!"

They separated; and years elapsed ere Mortlake and his friend again met. We will now follow the strange fortunes of the junior.

Young Mortlake—for so he must in future be termed—suffered the usual inconveniences of a sea voyage; and, if ever his boyish inclination, influenced by a perusal of the fascinating fiction of "Robinson Crusoe," had given him a fancy for the pleasures of a seafaring life, they yielded speedily to the irresistible effects of sea-sickness.

The vessel reached the island in about six weeks, and Tom presented his credentials to Mr Tresham, from whom he met a favourable reception. He had an apartment assigned to him in the house, and was treated as one of the family. To the duties of the counting-house, irksome in the outset, he became soon reconciled. His anxiety to please was not overlooked by his master, who, finding him able and apt, gradually raised both his rank and his salary. Before five years had elapsed, he was head clerk in the establishment. Favourites are not much liked; but Tom bore his honours so meekly, and was so obliging, without being obsequious, that his rise neither excited envy nor surprise—indeed, it was looked upon as a matter of course; and the astonishment would have been, not that he had risen, but that he had *not* risen in the establishment.

When he first arrived, he was pestered with questions as

to birth, parentage, and education. These ordinary, but impertinent queries, he parried with equal good-humour and tact. All that could be extracted from him was, that he was protected by Mr Mortlake, and that that was his own name. Mr Tresham, however, put no questions. Sir Edward Vavasour was rarely mentioned. Little was known of him, excepting that several thousands a-year were annually remitted to England as the produce of his estates. Latterly, Tom observed that these returns were made to account of Lord Mortlake. This puzzled him; and, upon a question to Tresham being hazarded, he coldly answered—

"The possessions of Sir Edward Vavasour belong now to Lord Mortlake; but remember the request of your benefactor—to ask no questions."

Other matters of more importance now occupied our hero's mind, and he gave himself no further thoughts on the subject. The first fruits of his labour were piously remitted to his mother, through his English correspondent. From her he (through the same channel) learned that Sir Edward Vavasour had given her a nice little cottage and garden, on the Vavasour estate, in England, rent-free, and that she had sold off everything in Merton, as the recollections there were unpleasant—the reason assigned being her former services as housekeeper in the family. No attempt had been made by him to elicit a confession of her son's residence. She farther stated, that she regularly received twenty pounds every half-year from some unknown person; and that she was, therefore, as happy as she could be in the absence of her son.

The letters from his patron were warm and affectionate. Some little presents Tom had ventured to make; and a few of those lovely tropical shells, transmitted to the unknown young lady, were cordially accepted, not so much for their value, as for the indications they afforded of the unabated

regard of the giver. Tom devoted a certain portion of each day to study. His early education had been, so far as it went, good; and he was enabled, by severe application, to master the Roman authors, and enjoy their beauties.

The death of his mother, during the fourth year of his residence in the tropics, was a heavy blow to him. He had lived in hopes of coming back to Britain with a fortune sufficient to support her in affluence; but his pious intention was frustrated. One consolation he had, that the kind lady who, with his patron, took such an especial interest in his affairs, had watched over her dying moments, and afforded her every comfort.

In the tenth year of his sojourn, a great revolution in his fortunes took place. One morning, Mr Tresham called him into his private room.

"Mortlake," said he, "you have been now ten years in our service; and, during that time, I have never had cause to find the slightest fault with you. The demise of the senior partner compels me to visit England. Your patron has written me urgently to admit you as a partner; now, although his recommendation must have weight with me, I can assure you that I need no solicitation to do an act of justice. I rejoice, by adding your name to the firm, to show you how much I esteem you, and what unbounded confidence I have in you."

Tom justly felt gratified by this communication. He was grateful for the never-slumbering care of his English patron, and equally so for the personal regard of Tresham, who, having thus removed a considerable portion of the burdens of commerce upon his younger partner, left the island, and safely arrived in London, where, for several months, he was engaged in adjusting the company's accounts, and effecting a settlement with the representatives of the deceased. The business, meanwhile, went on under the name of Tresham, Mortlake, & Co., and was managed with as much prudence

and profit by the junior partner as it had previously been by the senior one.

Tresham having realised a fortune, at the age of fifty resolved to return to England to enjoy it. Upon this occasion, his nephew, who had come out some time after Tom, became a partner, and, just twenty years from the period of his advent, did Thomas Mortlake, Esq., resolve, at the age of thirty-six, to return to his native land, leaving the affairs of the company to be exclusively managed by young Tresham, who was fully adequate to the task.

He embarked in a vessel of the company's; and having had a fair wind, in a few weeks beheld the chalky cliffs of Old Albion. He found his patron and Tresham awaiting his landing, and a carriage ready to bear him away. The meeting was cordial. Twenty years had not affected his patron much. He was about forty-five years of age, but looked perhaps a little younger. There was a dignity about his manner which Tom had never previously remarked; but there was no lack of kindness; on the contrary, it was obvious at a glance that his return was most acceptable to his friend. Nor was Tresham less friendly.

As Tom stepped into the carriage, he was thunderstruck to observe a coat-of-arms on the panels, with a *baron's* coronet.

"Indeed! Mr Tresham, have you been raised to the peerage?"

Tresham smilingly replied—

"Not yet. We don't know, however, what may happen. Irish peerages may be had cheap. The carriage is not mine: it belongs to one of our best customers, Lord Mortlake."

"Bless me!—how kind in his lordship!" was the rejoinder. "Is he, sir, a friend of yours?" turning to his patron.

"I think," was the answer, "I should know him better

than most people; but come, tell me how affairs are going on in Antigua."

A desultory conversation followed, which lasted nearly the whole period of their journey. At last the vehicle approached a magnificent baronial seat, through a long avenue of lime-trees, then in full blossom.

"Here we are!" said the elder Mortlake. Upon leaving the carriage, Tom and his companions entered a spacious hall of the olden time, the proprieties of which had been carefully preserved, and which was pretty much in the same state as it had been during the reign of Elizabeth. Taking Tom by the hand, his friend welcomed him to his family residence, and told him that a lady up-stairs—an old friend of his—was waiting to receive him. "But," added he, "you will perhaps require to go to your apartments."

Tom, having put himself to rights, was led by Mortlake to the drawing-room, where he beheld his mysterious female visitant and a young lady of about nineteen, who, from her resemblance, it was not difficult to discover was the daughter of his host. Two fine-looking aristocratic lads, the one aged perhaps sixteen, and the other nearly eighteen, were standing beside their sister, chatting and laughing with Mr Tresham.

The lady rose to receive her guest, when Tresham interposing, exclaimed:—

"Allow me—Lady Mortlake, Mr Mortlake; Mr Mortlake, Lady Mortlake."

Tom was confused, certainly; but his good manners did not forsake him, and he expressed his gratification at again beholding the lady, in appropriate and feeling terms.

"Mr Mortlake," said she, "I am happy—very happy—to receive you at Vavasour, which, I trust, you will consider as your home." Turning to her daughter—"Emily, my love, this is Mr Mortlake, whom you have heard your father

and myself talk of so freqnently." He was next introduced to the sons, by whom he was received with equal kindness. His patron then took Tom aside.

"The mystery," said he, "will soon be explained; in me you behold Lord Mortlake; but, on that account, not less your sincere friend. No one, not even Tresham, but believes you to be a relation of the family, except Lady Mortlake and myself; so be collected, and assume a character which, some day or other, I confidently hope may be yours legally."

The latter words sounded strangely in our hero's ears; but this was a day of wonders, and when they were to end he could not conjecture.

"Sir Edward Vavasour?" he whispered.

"Is no more!" was the reply.

A week passed happily, and Mortlake, in the society he esteemed and respected, was superlatively blessed. One morning after breakfast, Lord Mortlake took him into the library; and, locking the door, bade him be seated.

"Mortlake," said his lordship, "the time for explanation is at hand; it ought not any longer to be delayed; but, before disclosing much that may astonish you, be assured that I make the disclosure without seeking any pledge of secresy from you. I shall leave it entirely to yourself, when you have heard all, to take what course you may judge expedient."

"My lord! do not think so meanly of the creature of your bounty as to suppose that, whatever may be the nature of your communication, I shall ever use it to your prejudice."

"Make no rash promises, Mr Mortlake. Hear me, and decide. I told you Sir Edward Vavasour was no more; and yet he is only so in one sense—his title is merged in a higher one: he is now Lord Mortlake!"

"Gracious Providence! Sir Edward Vavasour Lord Mortlake? Can it be possible?"

"It *is* possible; Lord Mortlake is before you. But hear me out. You are probably aware that the late Sir Thomas Vavasour had a younger brother, Richard; and it has perhaps come to your knowledge that he was married to Miss Mortlake, a lady of birth and fortune, the daughter of an extensive proprietor in Antigua. Mrs Vavasour was a Creole by birth, and a woman of violent passions. Her husband led a very unenviable life—but let me pass that over. Of that marriage I was the sole offspring, and was named heir by my maternal grandfather to his large estates, after the demise of my parents. This equitable arrangement of his property created a prejudice in my mother's mind against me, as she could not brook the idea of being interfered with in the use of that which she thought she was entitled to enjoy without control. When my father died, I was placed under the superintendence of my uncle, Sir Thomas, who, himself a proud and passionate man, had a great contempt for his equally proud and passionate sister-in-law; hence a new seed of enmity was sown.

"My mother wished to make a fine gentleman of me: my uncle detested the whole tribe of 'puppies,' and determined to make a man of me. He carefully provided for my education; and, at the proper time, placed me in the Temple, where I studied jurisprudence for a few years with considerable success. The heir of a large estate, my uncle never wished me to do more than acquire habits of industry and application. My mother did all she could to unsettle me—but in vain. I had a will of my own, and was by no means disposed to become her vassal.

"She was descended, through the intermarriage of one of the Mortlakes with a co-heiress, of the ancient Barons de Mortuo Lacu, who figured during the reign of the Edwards. This Mortlake was heir-male of the last baron; but his stock had come off before the family were ennobled. Now, Mrs Vavasour had a very intense desire to become Baroness

de Mortuo Lacu, or Mortlake; and as she had a legal claim —being the undoubted representative of a co-heiress—it required political influence only to accomplish her object. My uncle could have effected this; but he gave the most decided opposition. He had no idea that the Vavasour name should be entombed, even in the sepulchre of the peerage. In his estimation, the Vavasours, who had fought with Cœur de Lion in the Holy Land, who had perished by dozens in the wars of the Roses, who had bled with Richmond at Bosworth, and who had taken up arms against the omnipotent Cromwell, were worth all the Mortlakes that ever breathed.

"For this opposition my uncle was never forgiven by Mrs Vavasour. She vowed vengeance, and she kept her vow. She presented a petition to the King, which was referred to the Peers; and, after incurring enormous expense in proving her pedigree, she succeeded in obtaining a decision finding the barony in abeyance amongst the co-heirs of the last Lord Mortlake, and that she was the representative of the eldest co-heir. Thus far she got, but not one step farther. The desired writ of summons was withheld. Meanwhile, she got entangled in pecuniary difficulties. In this situation, she, to my surprise, applied to Sir Thomas for a loan. The result of this application may be anticipated; for, while refusing her request, my uncle took the opportunity of reading her a severe lecture upon her extravagance and ambition. She was in a towering rage upon receipt of his answer; but, as I was of age, I thought it my duty, especially as the Peerage proceedings were to my ultimate advantage, to raise a sum of money upon my eventual interest, by which means her debts were paid off. The consequence of this was, that, whilst I propitiated my mother on the one hand, I offended my uncle on the other.

"I was at this time in love with the present Lady Mortlake. She was well connected, had fortune, and was suf-

ficiently accomplished; but she did not come within my mother's list of advantageous wives. She was neither fashionable nor cared about fashion; and could not disguise her contempt of idle and silly women of quality. My mother placed her interdict upon my nuptials. I remonstrated, but to no purpose; and, although under no obligation to consult my relatives, I wished at least to have the countenance of Sir Thomas, and I took the bold step of writing to him. To my gratification and surprise, I received a gracious answer; and, I presume, my mother's opposition was itself, in the estimation of my uncle, a sufficient recommendation. Acting upon his consent and approbation, I married; but the result was fatal to Mrs Vavasour, who, upon learning what had taken place, got into one of her tremendous passions, and burst a blood-vessel. After lingering a few weeks, she died, leaving behind her a letter, which was fated to be the cause of both our troubles. A few days after its transmission, I received an epistle from him, which, from its incoherency, indicated, as I supposed, positive insanity. I resolved to lose no time in visiting him; but, as I wished my intended journey to be kept quiet, I gave out that I was merely going to Liverpool for a few days, where my wife had some relations. I arrived at Jedburgh; and, as Merton was not far off, I resolved to walk there; and I calculated that I should arrive about the time that my uncle was taking his evening *siesta*. Leaving my portmanteau at the inn, I proceeded on my way; and, as I was familiar with every inch of ground, took a by-path, which led into the policy, and which terminated in a door that opened into the garden. This door was kept open until the gardeners left their work, when it was locked for the night. I passed through, towards the stairs which descended from the terrace into the garden; and, in a few minutes, found myself in the presence of Sir Thomas.

"My uncle was not a little startled at my unexpected ap-

pearance. He had apparently partaken freely of wine—at least he was in a state of excitement.

"'By what right do you come here?' was the first inquiry.

"'Why, my dear uncle, I was surprised at your late letter, and came personally to ascertain what you meant.'

"'Mean! and do you pretend, sir, to be ignorant of my meaning?'

"'Indeed, uncle, I am.'

"'Uncle—don't uncle me, sir—I am no uncle of yours.'

"I now thought his insanity undoubted.

"'Be composed, my dear sir,' I rejoined; 'do you not know Edward Vavasour, your attached nephew?'

"He rose—his eyes had a peculiar expression—one I had never witnessed before: naturally of a dark-grey, they seemed to take the hue of a fiery red, and they glared fearfully.

"'The house of Vavasour is doomed—its last hour has come;' and, saying these words he drew from his pocket-book a letter, which he threw towards me. I seized it; and judge of my horror when I perceived this paper."

Lord Mortlake then took from his escritoire the following letter:—

"SIR THOMAS,—You have had your triumph—my triumph comes now. The despised Mortlake rejoices in the extinction of the proud Vavasour. Know, haughty man, Edward is not the son of your brother!"

"It is not possible to describe my feelings, Tom, at this instant—my head turned round. That the statement was false, I doubt not; for I knew better than Sir Thomas the deep feeling of hatred my mother could entertain, and did entertain against us both.

"'Uncle, this letter is the legacy of an enemy—allow me to retain it, and I will bring positive evidence to disprove the assertion it contains.'

"My uncle was too much excited to listen to me. In a hoarse and angry voice, he muttered—

"'Give me the letter, you villain!'

"I endeavoured to pacify him, but without success; when, suddenly rising, he seized a knife, and, rushing forward, made a thrust at me with it. I avoided the blow, and retreated. He, incautiously advancing, lost his footing, and fell with the knife underneath. I hastily stepped forward to raise him, but had not strength to do so; for, by one of those strange and unaccountable accidents, which not unfrequently give the air of romance to real life, the point of the knife had been turned towards his body, and, passing between his ribs, had pierced his heart. He died in an instant. I endeavoured again to raise the body, but in vain. I drew out the knife, and blood then came with it. To describe my situation at this terrible moment is impossible: my uncle dead at my feet—no one to witness how the accident happened—I might be dragged as a felon to trial for his supposed murder. My grief for his unhappy end was soon absorbed in fears for my own safety—for, here was I, the apparent heir, discovered with the man to whom I was to succeed, a bleeding corpse beside me; then the quarrel between us—the stigma thrown upon me by my vindictive parent, which, for aught I knew, Sir Thomas might have bruited abroad—all this made me tremble. Even if acquitted, still the suspicious circumstances of the case would be greedily seized upon by the public, which never judges favourably, and a stain would have been cast upon the family name never to be effaced. My uncle was past all human assistance, and my remaining could not aid him. I therefore fled, unobserved by any one; and barely three hours had elapsed from my leaving the inn, until I was again its inmate. At a late hour I heard a noise of voices, which accorded ill with my morbid state of feeling. I rang to know the cause; and the answer to my inquiry

was the announcement that a dreadful murder had been committed upon Sir Thomas Vavasour, and that you, Tom, had been taken into custody, under such circumstances as warranted the strongest presumptions of your guilt.

"My astonishment could only be equalled by the horror I felt at having caused an innocent fellow-creature to be placed in hazard of his life. However, I was sufficiently collected; and, having learned that you could not be brought to trial for some time, I left the place with the firm resolution that, be the consequences what they might, not one hair of your head should be injured.

"I had no secrets from my wife, and to her I disclosed everything. After some deliberation, we agreed that it was best, if possible, to procure your escape from the prison; as, if that could be accomplished, there would be no necessity for any disclosures to gratify the inquisitive and malicious. I resolved to act by myself, without the assistance of any one. My first object was to prevent interference of the country writers; and this I accomplished easily enough, by creating an impression that they would give offence to the new Baron of Merton, if they ventured to assist you. Thus I deprived you of the advice of these worthies, which, after all, was no great loss. I should have regretted your imprisonment, had I not been informed that you were a *mauvais sujet*, and that the restraint would do you no harm, as it might induce you to reflect.

"With my wife's assistance, I procured a female dress, bonnet and cloak. I also bought a file, a rope-ladder, and some aquafortis, as I thought it would be no very difficult matter to help you out of an old Scotch county jail. Lady Mortlake had an uncle resident a mile or two from Liverpool. This fact presented an ostensible object for a trip, and we set off together. I left her with her relative; and, crossing the country, I got to Jedburgh in good time. I was quite unknown, as, prior to my last eventful visit, many

years had passed by since I had been in the County of Roxburgh. I gave myself out to be an Edinburgh writer, which was believed.

"I thus got free access to you, and the result I need not repeat. The gig I bought for the purpose, as well as the horse. I had them in readiness at a village at some distance, having given the landlord of the inn to believe that it was merely an ordinary case of elopement. In order to mystify the folks of Jedburgh, your letter was enclosed under cover to my wife, who herself drove to the post-office, and put it in the box, in this way destroying every possibility of detection. I caused the body of Sir Thomas to be interred at Vavasour, where his two brothers had previously been buried. This prevented the necessity of my personal presence at Merton, where perchance I might have been recognised as the person who left the counting-house so hurriedly on the day of the supposed murder. I have never lived at Merton since; it is occupied by the factor, and, in virtue of the deed of entail, the Scottish estates belong now to my second son. I induced your mother to reside on the English estate, where my wife could personally attend to her comfort. The rest you know. Our travels made me intimately acquainted with you, and I found you had talent, tolerable acquirements, and an affectionate heart; and I was determined to aid you, if you would be but true to yourself. Your vices were the result of idleness, and the foolish indulgence of a fond mother. Do not think me harsh when I say so; but, Tom, had you not been removed from her, you would have been lost. Oh, what have parents to answer for, by allowing their children to take their own way! From my connection with Antigua, I had no difficulty in providing for you. My cousin, Mr Edward Mortlake, managed my West Indian estates—a source of revenue to the company of which he was senior partner. I had merely to signify my wishes to place a young friend in his count-

ing-house, and it was granted. Neither he nor Tresham knew your real history—they both thought you some offshoot of the Mortlakes. The latter was expressly desired to conceal my name, and to avoid notice of the Vavasour family as much as possible. And he kept the secret well. My accession to the Vavasour estates brought without any trouble that which my misguided mother so much coveted; for, as my political support was not to be despised, ministers induced the king to terminate the abeyance, and I received my summons as Baron Mortlake. The story imposed upon my poor uncle by Mrs Vavasour was, as I was from the first assured, a malicious fiction of her own; for, luckily, I was able to trace out the whole circumstances connected with my birth; and the testimony of the nurse and medical man, which I obtained in a quiet way, were perfectly conclusive. Indeed, legally, my mother's declaration availed nothing; but I was anxious, morally, to satisfy myself, as far as I could, that I was the son of her marriage with Mr Richard Vavasour. I have now told you all. As I was the accidental cause of your perilous situation and loss of character, it was but common justice to assist you as far as lay in my power. You have raised yourself to respectability and affluence, partly by my recommendation, but principally by your own exertions. You owe me, therefore, nothing; and, on the contrary, I am still considerably your debtor. If, after reflection, you think a disclosure necessary to clear the reputation of Tom Vallance, you have my full permission to make it."

"Never, my dear lord—or, if you will allow me to term you, my dear friend—shall I make the slightest use of your confidence. You have, from a worthless and idle vagabond, metamorphosed me into a reputable and honest man. Tom Vallance has ceased to exist; but the heart of Tom Mortlake is too deeply attached to his benefactor ever to do anything that would cause him the slightest pain."

"You are a noble fellow, Tom, and well deserve your fortune."

Several months after this conversation, the public journals announced that "Thomas Mortlake, Esq., of the firm of Tresham, Mortlake, & Tresham, was married, by special license, at Vavasour, to Emily, eldest daughter of the Right Honourable Edward Lord Mortlake." If an accomplished and sweet-tempered wife, a fine family, an attached friend, good health, and a competent fortune, could make any one happy, then Tom Mortlake was superlatively blessed.

THE SERJEANT'S TALES.

THE BEGGAR'S CAMP.

I RECUR again to the strange adventures of Serjeant Square, and present another section of them to the readers of the "Border Tales:"—

With ruined prospects, and friendships severed by death (he began), I resolved to bid, once more, farewell to my native Edinburgh.

I passed two or three days in this listless manner, each being to see me put in force my resolution to depart; till at length, having provided myself with a seaman's dress, taken the powder out of my hair, seized a stout stick, and provided a small bundle of necessaries, I once more set out upon the world, caring little whether I went to the south or the west, to London or Bristol, to Greenock or Port-Glasgow. I had, in my absent state of mind, almost unconsciously, or perhaps from habit, taken my way down the Canongate, and had reached the girth cross—a few steps, and the streets of Edinburgh would pass from under my feet, perhaps for ever. I neither knew nor cared. A flood of painful recollections came over me, as I stood scarce knowing for what object I had paused. So doubtful and indifferent, so undecided did I stand, that, to put an end to the recollections that pained me whilst I hesitated, I took a piece of copper from my pocket, and, tossing it up into the air, I cried, "A head for England—a lady for Scotland!" The halfpenny tingled at my feet, the king's head looked to the sky, and, as if relieved of a care, I moved quickly on, nor once looked behind, until I had placed Arthur's Seat between me and the city.

Thus moving along, sometimes listlessly, at others quickening my pace, I had journeyed on until I had reached the neighbourhood of Berwick. The day had been overcast with partial light showers; several times I had resolved to stay for the remainder of the day and night in the next inn I came to; but, enticed by partial clearings up of the weather, I still walked on, until towards sunset, when the weather all at once put on the most threatening aspect, and the rain fell very heavily. There was neither house nor shelter of any kind in sight; the thick, dense clouds that came driving from the west completely obscured the twilight I had calculated upon. At length I perceived, at a small distance from the road, a house, with light issuing from the windows. I knocked for admittance, which was at once cheerfully given, and every exertion made for my comfort by the kind host and hostess—a farmer and his wife. To my inquiries if they could oblige me with a bed for the night—

"You are kindly welcome to the shelter of our roof," said the farmer, "and a seat by the fire; and, were it not for a strange circumstance, you might have both a room and a bed."

"William—William!" said the wife, with a look of great alarm, "do not speak of it; I could not think of even putting a dog there, far less a Christian. I will give the stranger a pair of blankets, and make a good fire for him; but do not speak of that fearful room. I wish the laird would allow us to pull it down."

"Grace, my woman," replied he, "I did not mean him to pass the night in it. I only, without thinking any harm, mentioned it. I wish, as well as you, that it were taken down."

Struck by their strange discourse, I requested my kind host to tell me the history of the apartment that seemed to give them so much uneasiness.

Drawing his seat more near to the fire—"I have not the smallest objection," said he, "as it will show, whatever is the cause of the strange disturbances, that there is no blame on our part. This bit land that I farm has been in our family for more than two nineteen years, and the third nineteen of the lease is nearly expired. Both the old and present lairds have been good landlords to us—we could not well refuse any small favour they required at our hands; and, indeed, we always found ourselves the gainers for any little that was in our power. A few months after the rebels were defeated, and the rebellion quelled by the battle of Culloden, the young laird came back to the Big House again safe, and we all rejoiced. On the day after his arrival, he came to our house to visit us, for he was always like one of ourselves. I saw there was something upon his mind, he was so douce and thoughtful—not in the least like his former way, which was all laughing and chatting with every one. It did not become me to inquire the cause; so, after staying a short time, he requested me to come out and take a turn with him, to see some young trees that had been planted before he joined the king's army. As soon as we were a short distance from the house, he stopped, and, looking me full in the face—

"'William,' said he, 'I believe you would not do anything to harm or bring me into trouble.'

"I think my face flushed, for I found my ears glow at the supposition.

"'No, laird; I would far rather harm or bring myself into trouble. Who has belied me to your honour? I am certain neither thought nor word of mine ever gave you cause to suspect me.'

"I really felt hurt and grieved for a moment, until he took my hand in his, and smiled.

"'William,' said he, 'I am sorry if I have unintentionally hurt your honest feelings. I have nothing but good faith

in you. I have an affair of importance on hand, and you must aid me.'

"'With all my heart,' replied I. 'Only tell me what I am to do.'

"'There is one for whose safety I am most anxious,' continued he; 'his life is in danger. In my own house he cannot be concealed; in yours he may. I shall provide for it, if you are willing to encounter the risk and inconvenience. You have no family or servants that reside with you. I shall build an apartment attached to your house, which he shall occupy; and you will attend to all his wants, and administer to his comforts as much as in your power.'

"To all this Grace and I gave our hearty consent. Everything was made ready in much less time than I could have conceived possible; the laird superintending all himself, and we obedient to his will. When all was to his mind, he went from home for a few days, leaving word with me, that whoever should give me his letter, authorising me to put them in possession of the room, I was at once to comply, and ask no questions.

"For those who had taken any part with the prince, it was a troublesome period. The cruelties committed by the king's troops in the Highlands, made our blood run cold in our veins; and we now pitied those whom we had a few months before hated and feared. Numbers were in prison, waiting a bloody release, more objects of pity than those who were butchered outright. The law sometimes realises the tales of the crocodiles, and weeps over the victims it is intent to devour. Well, the second evening after the laird left us, there came to our door a poor, aged man, scarcely able to support himself upon his staff; his keen, grey eyes were at one time fixed upon the ground, and the next, when he looked up, piercing into my inmost thoughts. With a tone of voice which affected humility, he requested rest and a little food. There was a round fulness in the subdued

tone, that ill assorted with the apparent age of the individual; yet I welcomed him into the house—for the needy never left our door empty. When he was seated, I saw his searching eye scan the apartment. Grace was seated at her wheel, while I had been reading to her the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' and the book lay on the table. The first words he spoke were to inquire if there were any other inmates in the house except ourselves. When I answered him that there were not, he stretched his body erect, as he sat on his chair. I could scarce believe my eyes. Grace gave a faint cry of surprise and fear. I looked to the gun that hung over the mantelpiece—for that he was a robber in disguise, was my first impression. It lasted, however, only for a moment; for, taking a letter from his pocket, he gave it to me. It was the promised letter from the laird; and so, taking the candle from the table, I requested him to follow me. He rose from the seat, and, clothed as he was in his beggar's weeds, I seldom had seen a more majestic figure, as he passed into the little apartment. Without uttering a word, he threw himself upon a seat, and motioned me to retire. I felt awed by his presence, and withdrew, shutting the door after me, and leaving him to his meditations. Grace prepared some supper for him; and, tapping on the door, inquired if he would partake of it. He replied no; and begged not to be disturbed until he called in the morning.

"Wondering at what we had seen, and who our guest could be, we retired to rest. I could hear at times the stranger groan heavily; and Grace, who slept little through the night, said she believed he had never lain down, for she had heard him at times walking and sighing heavily. Yet, afterwards, we had more to wonder at. For many weeks, he never allowed any of us to enter his room. At night only he would walk forth, after we were in bed. His food was handed in to him at the door. I never saw him, neither did

Grace; for he only exposed his hands, and part of his arms, when he took anything from her at the door. At first we felt very curious, and formed many conjectures who he could be; but, as the laird still remained in Edinburgh, we could learn nothing. Gradually, we became accustomed to all his humours, and thought little of them. Our few neighbours seldom visited us, and they never suspected there was any person except ourselves in the house. His taciturn and secluded manner at length wore off. Grace first was admitted to his apartment, then myself. Previous to this, a large trunk of books and necessaries, along with a letter to me, arrived at the Big House. I was to get the whole conveyed here in the best manner I could, for 'the gentleman,' as we called him, which I immediately set about. From this time he became an altered man. The almost misanthropical turn he had shown entirely left him; a shade of touching sadness overcast his countenance; and it appeared to me that his grey locks seemed more bleached by care than time; for his voice was full and melodious, and his face unmarked by a wrinkle.

"The executions at Carlisle, and the beheading scenes at Tower Hill, had been over for some time before the change of which I speak took place. Pleasing as it was to us, another source of discomfort, and a far more trying one, was discovered: he was a rank papist!—an idolater!—a worshipper of painted and graven images! Judge you what we two covenanted adherents of the Church of Scotland, in all her purity, felt, to have a part of our roof turned into a temple of Dagon! We were sore beset. What to do, we knew not. If the laird had been at home, our duty was plain before us—to demand back my pledge, which I never meant should shelter the enemies of truth, or convert my house into the abode of idolatry, to the risk of the salvation of our precious souls. But I knew not where to find him; and besides, much as I detested our guest's mode of wor-

shipping, I could not divest myself of a secret love for him —he was so condescending, so grand, yet so humble and polite in all he did; and I could not say there was anything amiss in his conduct, save the way in which he had decorated his lonely apartment. Grace there was not half so much perplexed as I was. 'Poor gentleman,' she said, 'if he is pleased, it would be wrong in us to find fault. I have nae doubt he is a poor, misled, ignorant papist, and wish from my heart he was as well informed as we are; but, if he thinks he is right, we may pity, but I wadna distress him. We must set a good example, and pray for his enlightenment night and morning.'

"I yielded to what she said, partly because I had an affection for him, and partly because I agreed in her sentiments; yet I never entered the idolatrous scene without feeling a shudder come over me. Upon the top of his little table stood a crucifix and an open book, by the side of which lay a string of beads. At the foot of his bed there was a picture of Jesus on the Cross; and upon his breast he wore another, which I often saw him take out and kiss, with his face raised to heaven, in an expression of joy and hope, while the tears stole down his face. Yet I could never think he had peace in his faith; for he was always attempting something to secure his eternal happiness—night after night flogging his bare shoulders—week after week tasting only bread and water—on Friday refusing flesh or fowl—and, in the spring of the year, living for weeks on eggs, bread, or milk. Surely, thought I, if the papists are Christians, they do not feel the faith in Jesus that a true Christian enjoys; for this worshipper obeys the traditions and commands of men more than the Word of God. I often wished to expound the truth to him; but we never, in all our converse, entered upon matters of faith. I worshipped with Grace, as my fathers had done, by ourselves, and he in his room, in perfect harmony. Yet, if strictness

of walk and self-denial be accounted holiness, he was far more holy than we; for, though his mind was not so much at ease in his faith, his yoke appeared grievous, and his burden heavy; and new penances, as he called them, were proofs of his ever coming short in his own estimation of his attainable object. Poor gentleman, he fell a victim to his own endeavours to attain peace of mind by his austerities! He would have been a bright and a shining light, had he only been brought up in the truth, as Grace and I had been. But I am growing tedious, and wandering from the subject. To be short, his life continued to be what I have described. We continued to love him as a father; and poor Colin" (pointing to an old dog that lay at our feet) "was his friend and constant companion. No one, save the laird, Grace, and myself, knew he was in our house; and, after two or three years, the laird called upon him often, and passed a few hours with him; but he seemed to feel pleasure only when alone, and engaged in his superstitious devotions. About twelve months since, he began evidently to decline in health, and the laird wished to remove him to the Big House, and procure medical attention; but this he would not hear mentioned.

"'I have vowed,' said he, 'to the Virgin, never to leave this place alive; but, if you will send to Edinburgh, and get me a priest of our Holy Faith, that I may receive the last rites and consolations of the True Church, my soul will thank you and depart in peace—you, my friend, know whom. If possible, I would wish you to learn if he is still alive; he will not refuse to come.'

"In a few days after, a stranger came to our door, and gave me a letter for the strange gentleman. I had not seen him for several days, Grace being his sole attendant; and even she dared not interrupt him but as little as possible. I was shocked at the change I saw upon him. He lay, pale and exhausted, his eyes bent on the crucifix, and his thin,

wasted hands clasped upon his bosom, as if he had been entranced. The sickly light of the wax candle that burned beside the crucifix cast a strange light upon the dead-like body before me. I started back, and looked aghast. The noise of my entrance had aroused him.

"'What want you, William?' he inquired, in a hollow voice.

"'It is a letter for you, sir,' said I, 'brought by a stranger, whom the laird said I might admit.'

A glow of pleasure passed over his face, as, with an effort, he raised himself, and took the letter from my hand.

"'Blessed Jesus!' he said, 'my prayers are heard! Admit him. He brings me peace and salvation through the Church. My penitence and penances have prevailed.'

"After the stranger, who was a Papist priest, was admitted, they remained alone until our guest died, which was on the second day after. He was buried by the laird. What or who he was, we never knew. All his books and papers were taken away; but the consequences of his residence still remain, as a punishment for harbouring a Papist, and suffering idolatry under our roof. The room he possessed and died in is, we are certain, disturbed by a spirit. We hear the door open and shut at night, and strange noises startle us from our rest. Two visiters, one after the other, who attempted to sleep in it, were terrified almost out of their senses; and it is for this reason we could not offer it to you to sleep in."

My curiosity was as much awakened by the vague account the good people gave me of the room in its present state, as my interest had been excited by the account of the poor outlaw. I am, I confess, not more brave than other people. I never courted danger for the love of it, or fled from it to meet dishonour; and, as for the reality of spectres, I neither believe nor disbelieve in them; having, in all my travels, never seen a legitimate one, nor troubled my head about

them. As much through curiosity, I believe, as anything else—for I am sure it was not the love of a good bed, far less an adventure—I told my hosts I would with pleasure sleep in the room, if they would allow me; and, after some honest endeavours to dissuade me, they consented. Supper and family-worship being finished, we all three entered the apartment—the good woman insisting upon our company while she prepared my bed, and her husband going more cheerfully when I proposed to accompany them. All the little duties were done by the dame in a hurried, timid manner; and, while she was occupied, I looked round. The door was only fastened by a wooden latch, which opened by a string hung upon the outside. The whole interior had a simple, clean, neat look, which pleased me. After a hasty good-night and God be with you, they withdrew. When I was left alone, the account I had just heard of the strange individual who had for so long a period inhabited the apartment passed over my mind; and who or what he could be gave rise to many a conjecture. I became low-spirited at the thought of the many miseries that human nature is liable to, under reverses of fortune from which neither birth nor riches can protect us. In this frame of mind I retired to rest—the idea of anything supernatural never entering my mind, and no shade of fear discomposing my thoughts. I soon fell asleep. How long I had slept I know not; but I was awakened by a slight noise at the door of the room, as if some one had put his hand upon it. I now felt alarmed, and expected to witness some fearful sight. The door opened and shut with a faint clang. I heard a movement on the floor. A cold sweat came over me. I raised myself upon my elbow. All was dark—impenetrably dark, and I saw nothing; but the curtains at the foot of the bed shook violently.

"Who is there?" I attempted to inquire; but only a faint murmur escaped my lips.

A strange noise and movement on the floor again took place, and I bolted up and sat in the bed. The curtains again moved at the head; and, as I thought, were partially opened. Still nothing was to be seen, and I put forth my hand to grope. Something as cold as death touched it. This was more than I could endure. I sunk upon the bed, buried my head in the clothes, and would have cried out; but that terror had paralysed every faculty. Whatever was the cause of my alarm, I now found that the object had come into the bed, and was either seated or lying between me and the wall. I dared not uncover my head, or put out my hands to ascertain what it might be. The icy feeling still thrilled through my frame; and thus I lay in mortal agony, under the conviction that the object still reclined immoveable by my side. My firmness gradually began to return; and with it came calm reflection. I thought I heard a heavy breathing; and slowly uncovered my head to hear it better. Once more I summoned a desperate resolution to put forth my hand. What did my hand encounter? —the shaggy coat of a dog. A gentle whine followed; the next moment my hand was licked by a warm tongue. I smiled at my late alarm. It was Colin.

Soon after daybreak I was awakened by my host, who came to inquire how I had passed the night. He was agreeably surprised to find me safe and well. To his inquiries, I related the adventure of the night without concealing my fears, and the chance there was of my having added one more testimony to the evil report of his apartment. The gratitude of the good people was extreme. They overwhelmed me with their thanks. They said I had rendered them a service they could not sufficiently repay. I had removed a cause of dread which had cast a gloom over their minds for many months; and, continued William—

"How silly it was in me not to know or think that it might be Colin!—for both the people who fled the room in

terror gave the same account of the early part of the adventure. Colin, poor thing," he said, as he patted the head of the dog, "you little knew the evil you did your master and mistress. You and he that is gone were dear friends and inseparable companions. No Christian could have shown more concern at his death. You never came out from beneath his bed while the body lay on it; and, when he was carried out, Grace had to hold you, to prevent your snapping at the company as they bore him away. For long you visited his grave, and sat for hours upon it. It is the remembrance of your old friend that makes you still visit his room when all is quiet at night. He that is now 'where the Lord will,' taught you to take the string in your mouth and pull the latch, that, always welcome, you might enter when you chose."

During this address to the dog, he looked wistfully in the face of his master, as if he comprehended all that was said. The weather having now cleared up, the morning was beautiful. After breakfast, I bade adieu to my kind hosts, with a promise that if I ever passed that way I should make their house my home, and sleep in the room I had freed from its evil name.

As I moved cheerfully along the road, chanting some snatch of a song to keep up my spirits, my ears were assailed, at a sudden bend of the road, by a rough voice.

"Holloa, messmate, cast here a few coppers to help to revictual a hulk all the doctors in the world could not refit for sea!"

Turning my eyes to the roadside, I saw, seated upon a bank, two strange objects—a stout young man, in a tattered seaman's dress, with one arm off by the shoulder and the other by the elbow, and a young, good-looking, but tattered female by his side. In a moment my hand was in my pocket, and, drawing near to them, the female rose and held out her palm in dumb show.

"Not so fast, young woman," said I, as I was putting a half-crown into his vest-pocket; "it is for Jack."

"Bless your honour," said he, "it's all one. That there young one is my wife; poor thing, she was struck dumb in real earnest, when she saw me come home to her thus maimed. Bless her pretty face, she did not forsake poor Bill for all that."

While he spoke, a strong feeling came upon me that I had seen his face before; but when or where I could not call to mind. As I stood gazing into his face, he looked as scrutinisingly at me.

"Were you ever in the East Indies?" inquired I.

"To be sure I was. In that place I lost my precious limbs," replied he.

"Then you must be Bill Kay, whom Captain H—— and I left at Bombay," said I.

"And you are Jack Square," said he. "Give me your hand, old shipmate." And he held up the stump to me, and burst out a-laughing as I shook the sleeve.

The female gave him an angry look, with so much more of meaning than anger, that I thought she knew all we said.

"Come, Betsy, don't be sulky," said he; "I wish to have a bit of a talk with my old mate. Come, be a good girl, and let us go back to Berwick. Jack Square, you will not be ashamed to walk home with us?"

The wife nodded a consent, and away we trudged to the town, from which we were only a small distance.

During our walk, I told him that I was on my way to London to look out for a vessel to India, as my fortune had been adverse in Scotland; and I was sick of the land, and careless what became of me.

"Never strike to an enemy, or quit the pumps while your vessel can float," cried he. "There are many ways of leading a jovial life. You were always my friend, and a good fellow. Give me your word, Jack, you will either

stay and join us, or pass on and do us no harm, and I will have no secrets from you Speak the word."

"I know not what you mean," I replied. "As for joining you, I do not think, in the meantime, I shall, until I know better about it; and as for hurting you or doing any harm, I give you my sincere assurance I will not, however much I might gain by it."

"Betsy, my dear," said he, "we are not going to the kenn; we will go home. I wish to entertain my old friend."

We then altered our direction, and, after proceeding down a dark and dirty lane, entered a neat and well-furnished room. As soon as we entered, and the door was shut—

"Betsy," said he, "there is no use for gammon now; find your tongue, lass, and help me to find my arms."

"As you please, Billy," said the dumb wife. And both retired to another apartment, from whence they soon returned—she well dressed, and Bill as perfect in every limb as when we had parted, he to remain in India, and I to return home.

I believe he had told her his intention and who I was in the time they were away; for, seeing my surprise, he laughed aloud, while she, smiling, took me by the hand, and welcomed me to their house. Now that her begging disguise was thrown off, she really was a most bewitching girl, of the gipsy cast—brilliant black eyes and hair, her features regular, almost to perfection—the loveliest brunette I had ever seen. Bill smiled good-naturedly at the admiration my looks expressed, as I gazed at her; and, slapping me on the shoulder—

"Square," said he, "is she not a beauty? You must not fall in love with her if you stay—that I must make a condition."

We all laughed.

I said, if I fell in love, I could not help it; the fault was

his for bringing me into temptation. A large square bottle of brandy and a jug of water were set on the table, and while the wife was busy preparing dinner, Bill gave me the following account of himself:—

"You know, Jack, I am no scholar," he began; "only a pretty good seaman, as far as hand, reef, or steering goes; so I soon found India was no place for me, in a regular country ship. I could not abide these black, lazy, cowardly rascals of lascars; and there were crowds of them in all the vessels I could find. They are well enough in fair weather; but when it blows the heart is blown out of them. They are either in the way, or skulking in corners; so I took the first opportunity of returning home to Britain again. When I came to London, I got into all manner of mischief, and lost my guineas like winking, above two hundred in one week; and the remainder, clothes and all, in one night in Wapping; for I awoke in the morning in the watch-house, bruised, and with only a watchman's greatcoat thrown over me. I had been thrown out of a window, or pushed down some stair, and in that state they told me I was found by the watchman. I had now time to reflect, but nothing to reflect upon, for all I had in the world was a shirt and a pair of trousers. There was no charge against me, so I walked from the watch-house like a man adrift in an old boat, without oars or food. I went to the wharves, for pity or employ. I got fitted in a kind of way; but could not find a vessel, for there were too many like myself What to do I knew not. More than once I thought of doing as I had been done by—that is, helping myself where I could; but, although I was often without food, and slept in the streets or under a boat, I, somehow, could not bring my mind to that. I often wished I was again in Scotland, where I had friends and was known, but how to get there I knew not. At length the thought came into my mind—I could beg my way down. I could be no worse than I was

in London—and where was the odds? A beggar in London was no better than a beggar in Scotland, or anywhere else; for my Scotch pride was by this time starved out of me; so off I set; but was poorly enough off, for I was not then up to the trade, so my stout look and honest truth met nothing but unkindness and insult. At length, one day, as I was on the point of dying from starvation (for England is not a country for an honest beggar), I fell upon a gang of gipsies, upon the borders of a heath, making merry. I joined them, and was kindly and hospitably received. Betsy there was one of the troop. From the moment I saw her, I took a fancy to her pretty face—joined the gang for her sake, and soon won her regard and love. I was now content and happy. We had victuals of the best in plenty, and roamed where we pleased, with no restraint but our own wills. I found there was some tough work before my hand. Betsy had one or two pretenders to her love, in her own and other gangs, and my rivals were not to be lightly thought of, for in their minds none but the brave deserve the fair. It is, win your bride and keep her while you can. There was one stout, active fellow, whom her parents intended for her husband, but Betsy had no wish for the match, and my arrival confirmed her dislike to him. Our loves were only known to ourselves, and our interviews stolen, until my services had gained me the esteem of her father. He was patriarch or head of the gang, and kept the common stock, guiding our movements and directing our operations as far as our wayward fancies could be guided—partly by argument, partly by yielding, but seldom by resorting to punishment, for all was done for our good, to the best of his judgment. No one thought of resisting his control; and if any became discontented, they left the gang—a step by no means desirable, for our safety lay in the strength of the camp. There is scarce a gang but is at feud with some other gang or gangs, and when they meet, nothing but the flight of the

weaker, or some other overruling cause, prevents a battle, in which murders are not unfrequently committed.

"Under the tuition of Betsy, I became a most expert beggar, as you witnessed this morning. My contributions to the common stock often equalled the amount of all the others put together. I became the pride of the gang; and no wonder—for I strove for Betsy, and was cheered on by her acclaim, while I was scowled at by my rivals, who were quick enough, though her parents had no suspicion of it, to see her preference of me. When we thought it proper time, I proposed to the father for the hand of his daughter. He had no objection to me as a son-in-law, further than that he had all but promised her to Long Ned, but would leave it to Betsy and myself to manage the affair as we best could, and would interfere no farther with his authority than for the good of the gang. If Betsy was pleased, he cared not whether Long Ned or I had her. When I told her the result of my conference with her father, she was as well pleased as myself.

"'Bill,' she said, 'you will not win me from Long Ned with both ease and honour. He is no contemptible rival. He will be at you as soon as he comes to the camp, for his mother will tell him. Now, be a man, and do not yield while you can stand to him; for, much as I love you—and you know I love you dearly—I could not marry you if you are beat. Nay, the people might make me marry him; and you must leave the gang, or your life would not be safe for one night. What says my Bill?'

"I looked upon the lovely girl with astonishment, her language was so unlike anything I had ever heard from a woman. In Scotland here, if a woman knew her lover was to fight, she would almost go distracted, and do all in her power to prevent him. I could scarcely believe my ears, I was as yet so little used to their ways. As I stood looking at her, a shade of anger passed over her face, and the tears

came into her eyes; she turned away her head, and sobbed aloud. This roused me.

"'What ails my Betsy?" I said, taking her in my arms. She still sobbed, and pushed me from her.

"'I am the most unfortunate girl in the world,' she cried. 'I love a man, and he is a coward.'

"'A coward, Betsy!' cried I. 'What do you mean? I am no coward. I fear not the face of clay.'

"Turning to me with one of her sweet smiles—

"'I am not deceived, then, in my Bill?' she said. 'He is not afraid of Long Ned?'

"'No, my love; nor of the whole gang, one after another—one down, another come on,' said I. 'Are we friends again?'

"'O Bill, we are more than friends,' she sobbed. 'I love you dearly, and am proud of you.'

"Arm-in-arm, we returned to the tents.

"Long Ned had just come home after an excursion; so, as soon as he saw us, his rage knew no bounds; and his dark eyes flashed fire, as he came forward and ordered me to quit my hold of the girl. There were few words passed between us; every one knew what was to take place, so no one interfered further than to see fair play. You recollect, Square, I always loved a bit of a row. The lessons I took on board from Sambo, the black cook, stood me now in great stead I learned from him the African mode, to hold the stick with both hands by the ends, and cover the body with it, more especially the head, having thus the advantage of striking with either hand, and puzzling my opponent. Ned, who was an expert cudgel-player, chose that weapon, I, nothing loth, agreed Two sticks of equal length were chosen Betsy at my side, held my jacket, while Ned's mother held his His anger was so great, he could scarce restrain himself until we were ready I knew my task, and was cool—as if I waited the boatswain's call

to it. So away we went. I at once felt my advantage; and, expert as he was, he could not reach me—my mode embarrassed him. I hit him on both sides, not severely, as I might with ease have done, but he had never touched me. We paused, for a minute or two, for breath.

"Ned,' says I to him, 'I bear you no malice. I could have struck you down every time I have touched you. Yield me Betsy, and be friends.'

"'I will die first,' he cried, kindling in rage.

"'And if you yield, I will disown you,' said his mother.

"As he made at me again—'Don't spare him,' cried Betsy, 'as you wish to win me.'

"This was enough; but he plied me so hard for some time, that it was with difficulty I could defend myself. I had been hit slightly several times before an opportunity offered, so active was he and quick in his assaults. But my mode was not nearly so exhausting as his; and it being now my turn, I embraced it: down he went as if he had been shot. His mother raised him up, and encouraged him to renew the fight; while Betsy wiped some blood from my face, which came from a slight wound in the forehead; and, squeezing gently my hand, said I was her own brave boy; able to win a wife, and protect her. I see you do not much admire my story, but it shows the character of the people I was among. So, the short and the long of it is, Long Ned was carried to his tent, beaten to his mother's satisfaction; and I was married to Betsy next day, agreeably to the gipsy fashion—that is, a feast was given to all the gang—and her father delivered her up to me with a long harangue, concluding by declaring us man and wife, and the others wishing us joy.

"Betsy and I did not remain long with the gang after this. Long Ned and his mother were our implacable enemies, and neither of us were safe from their revenge—not that I cared a straw for them openly, but I knew their cha-

racter too well to be at ease. Betsy and I left them, have lived well and comfortably since, and could save money, only there is no occasion for it. We, like all the men of superior minds in the world, live by our wits; there is no occasion for working when we can live without. I never want money and a good diet. Now, you say you have no particular object in view, save to get a ship for India: and why should you court difficulties and dangers abroad, when there is so rich a prospect before you at home? From experience, I can assure you no trade is so easy, or quickly learned, as begging. The first day is the worst; after that it came quite natural and agreeable."

There was a romance and bustle in the events he had narrated, which had a strange charm for me, and opened up a new leaf in the book of life. I had no conception of beggary but as extreme misery, and, until now, held them as synonymous terms, from what I had witnessed in Edinburgh in the early part of my youth. I had had no idea of the regular systematic beggar. My notions were formed upon the destitute widow and orphan, those whom I had herded with, who shrunk from importunity, and scarce let their wants be known, enduring hunger to the extreme ere they stealthily crept forth from their abodes of wretchedness, and returned as soon as their urgent wants were satisfied. To Bill I made known my surprise at the history he had given me of himself, and my wonder that any one should ask charity, save those who had no other means of supporting themselves.

"I once knew as little of the matter as you," said he, "but this I know now were none but the really needy to ask charity, they would soon be supplied, and fare well, but it is too good a trade, once begun, to be given up easily. But here is Betsy, to tell us dinner is ready."

The repast did honour to her cooking, and consisted of the best the town could afford. She herself sat at table,

more lady-like than I thought it possible a gipsy girl could have done.

"Bill," says I, "if your trade were as honourable as it appears to be profitable, I would commence it this night."

"And what is more dishonourable in it, than any other calling a man may choose to live by?" said the young wife, with a smile. "Is not the whole bent of every one's mind to get as much from every one of his fellow-men as he can? Does not the king and his ministers get all they can from the people by taxation? Do not the ministers of the church get all they can from their flocks? Do not the lairds get all they can for their lands; the merchant get all he can for his goods, and the poor man get all he can for his labour? Real utility or value enters not into their minds at bargain-making. It is how they can get most of their neighbour's property, in the safest and easiest manner. What is honour but a fluctuating opinion? As I have heard my father say when he spoke the words I am now uttering—it is honourable for kings to take their subjects from their peaceful employments, and send them to plunder and destroy other states, it is honourable to be one of the plunderers; for one man to shoot another for some trifling word is honourable. Every nation has its own notions of this same thing called honour. But we of the wandering tribe think it means gold; for he that has got the most of it is the most esteemed, and he that has not a penny in his purse has not a jot of honour, though he had all the virtues. And why? Because, from the king to the beggar, no one can expect to add to their store from him. He is an egg already eaten—an empty shell; and, as such, crushed and thrown aside. These are the words of my father."

I heard the bewitching creature with astonishment, and could not but admire how easily every class finds consolation to themselves, by arguing as it suits their views. I had often before remarked, that when numbers of any class as-

sociated, they rose in their own estimation ; but I had no idea that the beggars carried it so far.

"But it is under deceit and false pretence," said I, to enjoy the pleasure of hearing her speak, "you extort money from the humane and charitable. I would rather work to the death."

"That is a matter of choice or education," replied she. "We use no more deceit than is necessary to obtain our object, and all the world do the same, while we do more to give pleasure to the good than any other class. Don't we keep alive the kindly feelings of man ? My Bill there, as you saw him this morning, was a walking lecture upon the miseries of war , and I am sure, from what I saw in your looks at the time, that you felt a real pleasure in having it in your power to give him the half-crown—nay, had you walked on, you would have slept the sounder for it. Had you tippled it, or spent it foolishly, you would have regretted parting with it. Even now, that you think we had no need of it, your self-esteem is only wounded at being imposed upon; but your heart upbraids you not for your good intentions; and may not a beggar feel pleasure in the success of his arts as much as those of another calling ?"

"Does not Betsy speak like a parson ?" said Bill. "I can't say I feels as if all was right when I am rigged out for an excursion ; but, somehow, she appears to have reason on her side; and, even if I were to get a ship, I must leave my pretty Bess, so I just get on ; and I am now pretty well used to it If I had staid by my trade, as my parents wished me, I could have wrought for her at home , but Betsy is pleased, and I have no more to care for."

"And why should I not ?" she quickly replied. "I have been bred to it, and know nothing else. I could not live mewed up in a house, however grand. A wide heath, or a dark wood, with a few light, verdant, sunny spots embossed in its bosom, has far more charms for me than a crowded

city or painted room; and the piece of money, dexterously obtained, has a beauty about it that does not belong to the fixed income. I had as soon be in my grave as a sober citizen; for there would be as much exercise for the mind in the one case as the other."

For a moment I looked with admiration at the lovely girl, as her face glowed with animation while she spoke; but pity soon took its place, suggesting the mournful reflection, that a mind of her powers was in a state of nature, and what it might have been, had it been cultivated. A sigh escaped me at the thought of my own inability to lend instruction. She saw the cloud upon my brow.

"Come, Bill," she said, laughing, "you neglect your friend; he grows sad. Shall we to the kenn to-night? We are expected."

"To be sure, Betsy," replied he. "Square, fill your glass; and don't break your heart because Betsy is my wife, and can't be yours. There will be rare fun, I expect, and would advise you to go."

I was in that mood at the time, between the serious and the sad, contrasting the pious and modest Helen Grey with the pert and forward beauty before me. Both were lovely in their persons—but how different in expression and mind! Helen was a lily, modest, and filling the air around her with a mild perfume; Betsy, an exotic flower, of surpassing beauty, with an odour so powerful, it required time to render it not offensive; yet it was a lovely flower, and in a skilful gardener's hands would have been the honour of his plots, and the object of his pride. Under the example and tuition of Helen, I had felt some serious impressions—at times a thorn, at others a balm, as my own wayward actions were approved or condemned. I wished to speak seriously to the interesting creature before me, but could not find resolution. I was conscious that it would be an evening of regret if I was left alone, so I agreed to accompany them

"Hurrah!" shouted Bill; "you will, I see, be a mumper yet. But you can't appear in that rig, Square; you could not get admittance. Betsy will furnish you out of my store. Will you be a soldier, a sailor, or a ruined, burned-out tradesman? I guess you will be a tar?"

"Certainly," I replied.

"Shall you lack a whole fin, or part of one, or be lame of a leg? Make your choice."

"Oh, half-an-arm," said I, now ripe for the fun I expected.

In a few minutes Betsy had me so completely changed, I hardly knew myself, even when I looked in the glass. An immense long tie of false hair—mine being then of a sandy colour, the same nearly as Bill's—was brought forth, opened, and my own shorter tie secured in it. With a liquid she browned my face. To this I at first objected, until she assured me that she would wash it off in the morning. An old pair of canvas trousers, a ragged jacket, a shabby vest and hat, were given to me. When I came to put on the jacket, she caused me to double my arm, laying my hand upon the top of my shoulder; and there was a case in the tattered arm, made of leather, to receive it. With difficulty my doubled limb was forced in, presenting the elbow first. For some time the constrained position pained me, for there was a flap of leather that came over my open hand, and was made fast to my trousers, to diminish the bulk

"Where did you lose your arm, my good lad?" said the smiling Betsy, as she offered a halfpenny in jest.

"Faith, I do not know, mistress, if you have not cut it off for me," I replied

"Jack, that will never do," said she, "I will send for the constable, you impostor;" and she turned, smiling, from me, with all the airs of a fine lady; then, turning round, and assuming the attitude of a beggar, "Bless your pretty face," she said, "sweet lady, spare a halfpenny

to a poor tar, who lost his precious limb in defending the beauties of Old England."

"I have no coppers."

"Oh, bless you, beautiful lady," she continued, "I would die of want, were it not for angels like you;" and she whined along the floor, as if she had followed some one.

Bill and I could not refrain from laughter.

"Does she not do it in style?" he said, exultingly. "Take the dear creature's advice, and copy her, and you need never want a good bed and a good diet, besides money in your fob, and be a jolly beggar."

"Are there more kinds of beggars than one?" said I.

"Oh," replied he, "there are many kinds; for instance, jolly beggars, sturdy beggars, humble beggars, and randy beggars. I had forgot the gentle beggars; but you will see them of all descriptions."

And away we trudged—Betsy as an old decrepid woman, and with so well-managed a metamorphosis, that I, who saw the change effected, could scarce believe my eyes. Bill was not the same person I had seen in the morning: he only wanted his left arm, which was bandaged by his side, and his leg supported at the knee by a wooden substitute for the lower part of it.

"This," said he, "was my last cruising dress when I was among them. I was maimed, as you see, in the gallant Admiral Hawke's own ship, when we defeated Conflans. You may have either lost your fin there or at Cape Breton; for our meetings are a kind of masquerade—no one knows his fellow, but as in the character he for the time assumes."

After a few turns through dark alleys, we arrived at a low, dirty-looking public-house. As we entered, Bill whispered in my ear—

"Now, Square," said he, "this is Liberty Hall—every one eats what he pleases, drinks what he pleases, and, I may say, speaks as he pleases. All I advise is, do not be too

ready to take or give offence. Besty has agreed to sit by you—be guided by her."

We entered one by one. A single flickering light was attached to the wall; everything bespoke the most abject poverty, until we had passed through a second small apartment, when the sound of voices, mixed with boisterous laughter, fell upon my ears.

"We are too late, I fear," said Betsy; "the fun is begun."

The next moment the door opened—and such a scene! I did not think the universe could have produced such a collection of apparent misery and mutilation. The miraculous pool of Siloam, the evening before the angel descended to trouble the waters, I really believe, never furnished such a spectacle of incurables. To be more particular would only disgust you: all was hilarity and vulgar enjoyment. Viands of the richest kinds—roast fowls, and meats of all varieties—smoked on a table at one side of the room, and which, as called for by the guests, was cut off in proportion to the amount ordered, handed to the expectant guest, and the money received before the plate was delivered. Some had done, and commenced their favourite liquors; others were doing justice to the cookery—praising, and not a few finding fault.

"What shall I have the pleasure of handing to Mr. Kay?" cried the landlord, bowing.

"Betsy, my love, what shall we have?" said Bill.

"What you please, Bill, for myself. Square, what do you wish?" she said.

"Oh, I care not," I replied.

"Then, landlord, a duck; and have you any green peas yet?"

"The season is backward; I have some," replied he, "but they are a little high-priced."

"So much the better—send half-a-crown's worth with the duck, for me and my friends."

"Well, Kay, you always do the thing genteelly; but who is this friend of yours?" said a fat little man, in very rusty black, of a clerical cut.

"An old messmate of mine, I met by chance to-day—a real good un."

"As Mr Kay's friend, I drink your health, and our better acquaintance."

"Thank you, doctor," said Kay; and I did the same.

After every one had satisfied his appetite, and got his liquor before him, the noise of voices, joined to the boisterous laughter, was absolutely deafening—all were in committees of twos and threes, talking. I began to despair of getting my curiosity gratified by Betsy on the spot; for the noise was so great that to whisper was impossible. Never in my life had I witnessed such unbounded apparent happiness and glee—all was enjoyment. At length a little hunch-backed caricature of a man leaped upon the head of the table, and, seated like a Turk, crosslegged, struck the table with a wooden mallet, and, in a hoarse, croaking voice, commanded silence and attention to their president for the night. In a minute all was still. Without rising to his feet, he croaked forth—

"Ladies and gentlemen, we are met here to forget the cares and toils of the day. You have all (or you have your purse to blame) had your pleasure of the eatables—of the drinkables you shall have the same provided. I add no more, save a word for our worthy landlord. He says, if we do not be less noisy, and give him less trouble than the last time we met, he must either cease to enjoy our company, or be on more intimate terms with the magistrates—an honour he does not covet. He has been a man to be sought after by the authorities already. Now, ladies and gentlemen, I call on Rhyming Bob for his last new song—ruff him in. Up rose a tall, gaunt, shabby-genteel, pale-looking figure, bowed to the company, and began, in a cracked voice, af-

fectedly to chant some doggerel verses against the Ministers of State. I looked inquiringly at Betsy.

"Oh, that is the poet," said she; "a gentle beggar by nature and profession; he has no shift but his verses, and a poor shift it makes for him. He bothers the gentry with his rhymes; sometimes gets kicked out, sometimes a sixpence. Hand him, when done, a glass Bill; he has been more fortunate than usual, if he has one of his own. He had better attended to teaching his scholars than song-writing. Our friend the doctor here is also a gentle beggar—he gets nothing on the streets and highways—he writes a good letter as a distressed clergyman or reduced man of education, and lives well, as you see. A great number, almost all the maimed, are jolly beggars, like Bill, and what you are to be. They have numerous ways of earning a subsistence, and spend it as freely They never take anything save money in charity, for, poor souls, they are too feeble to carry heavy gifts."

The noisy applause of the poet's song put a stop to our whispering. When order was restored, Mrs. Kay was called upon for a song. Betsy immediately stood up in her old woman's attire, and astonished me, little as I know of music, by the sweetness of her voice, and the effect with which she sang, "An old woman clothed in grey" Twice was she obliged to sing it to the company, which she did with the utmost good nature. When the deafening applause had abated, or, I may rather say, the storm of noises had ceased, a stout, red-haired, broad-shouldered, rather shortish man was called upon to sing. He gave a Welsh song, the air of which was pretty, but the words uncouth to my ear.

"That is one of the sturdy beggars," said Betsy; "he refuses nothing that is given him, carries all upon his person, and often, before he reaches the proper place to dispose of his gatherings, they amount to the weight of many stones. He always tells the charitable, when asked what is his com-

plaint that prevents him from working—I can't speak the Welsh word, but it means 'sheer laziness.' The people are confounded at the, to them, unintelligible and strange name of the disease, and are ready to relieve the afflicted man. Once or twice, they say, he has been detected by countrymen of his own, who laughed at his impudence, and gave the true meaning of the words. The sturdies are a numerous class. The randies are nearly, if not, of the same class; they abuse and threaten until they are supplied, when they dare with impunity. The humble, poor creatures are old or real cripples—take what they get, and are thankful; there is not one of them here this night that I see."

We had now sat in the pandemonium for nearly three hours. The potency of the liquor had for some time began to preponderate—angry words were exchanging, and some were sleeping, with their heads leaning upon the table. Bill himself was more than half-seas over, and began to bawl out a sea-song. Betsy and I endeavoured to keep him in order, and wished him to retire. We had succeeded, and were rising to leave the company—Bill only half-inclined—when a stranger entered the hall of confusion and drunkenness. We were on our feet. I saw Betsy turn pale as death, and turn her head aside. A number of voices called out, "Hurrah! hurrah! here is Long Ned." A young female, whose eye I had noticed was seldom turned from where we sat, cried out—

"Betsy, you are not going away because your old sweetheart, Long Ned, has come in?"

"Shiver my timbers if we are!" cried Bill; and in a moment sat down and called for more liquor. I, as well as Betsy, saw that the envious female was bent on mischief; but how to prevent it I knew not. Long Ned had seated himself at the other side of the table, gloomy as Satan. I felt her tremble, as she sat by my side, I believe more through rage at the female than fear. Long Ned was evi-

dently bent on some mischief or other, and he was quite sober. Bill and he eyed each other for some time. Betsy was coaxing him, to get him away, as well as myself.

"No, I will not leave the room," he said, "while that scoundrel is in it; I will face him, or fight him out, if he says an uncivil word to you or myself."

The same female sat only one seat from him; I saw them whispering together. Betsy's dark eyes glanced fire. She unbuckled his timber leg, and took it off. Scarce was this done, when Ned said aloud—

"Tell me, Kay, how much you have sold the jilt Bessy for. I see she is very gracious with your ac——" He had only got thus far, when the wooden leg was launched across the table, and felled him to the ground.

A scene of uproar and confusion no words can express ensued; the lights were extinguished; blows were dealt furiously around; and the sleepers awoke and joined in the strife. Bitterly did I regret my curiosity, as well as the bondage my arm was in from its long confinement; it was benumbed and painful. As I had no immediate interest in the strife, I retired to one corner of the room, where I found several as anxious as myself to escape. Shouts of murder and groans were mixed with vengeful cries. At length the door was burst open, and a body of constables entered. The moment I saw this I slipped along the side of the room and darted past them, receiving in my flight several severe blows, and leaving the skirts and breasts of my jacket in the hands of those in the way who attempted to stop my career. I turned down the first opening I came to, and ceased to run, as no one appeared to follow me. Fortunately, I had the old canvass trousers and vest above my own, in which was secured my guineas and silver. With some difficulty I freed myself from the jacket, then I with ease got off the others, and had the mortification to find myself, pretty late in the evening, without a lodging, jacket, or hat.

As I began to cool, and find myself secure from pursuit, the contusions I had received from the staves of the constables pained me very much, particularly one I had received upon the head; I put up my hand, and found it bleeding pretty fresh. Thus was I in a fine mess to seek for a decent lodging, or account for my present plight. As I turned over in my mind for a plausible story, I perceived a respectable-looking inn still open, and made straight for it. There were several seafaring men, like captains of coasters, sitting in the tap. When I entered, all eyes were turned upon me. The landlord insisted upon turning me out, without allowing me to speak. The company took my part, and insisted that I should be heard. I had now my story ready as near the truth as I dared—I told them I was a stranger from Scotland, on my way to London, in quest of a vessel, and had only arrived in the town that evening, when I had had a quarrel and fight, having been insulted, and some one had carried off my hat, jacket, and bundle; but that I had plenty of money to pay my way. As soon as I had finished, the landlord became all civility; I got my head bound up, and a good lodging, and got intimate with one or two of the captains before I retired to bed.

Next morning my head ached, but nothing to speak of. I arose, sent for a dealer in clothes, and purchased a jacket and hat, had breakfast, and took a walk through the town. As I did not intend to leave it until I had heard the issue of the brawl, nothing else was talked of. The fight between them and the constables had been long and severe, for they made a desperate resistance; and it was not until several of the inhabitants had reinforced the civil power, that the beggars were secured, and lodged in jail, male and female. I wished only to know the fate of Bill and Betsy, and then started upon my journey—I wished to have no further intercourse with them. My bundle, and necessa-

ries in it, I had given up for lost, unless they were liberated, at least Betsy, through the course of the day. I could not have found my way to their room without inquiry; and this it was neither prudent nor of any use to make, until they were liberated. Well, the magistrates were busy examining them, I was told, the whole forenoon, and the issue was, that all the able-bodied rascals—Bill amongst the rest—were sent to man His Majesty's navy, and the females were to be confined, and then banished the town for ever.

I returned to my inn, and, by appointment, met my new acquaintances, the captains;—one of them, the captain of a brig, was loading grain for London. I was weary of walking on foot, and agreed with him for a passage, leaving my conductors to the beggars' ball in durance; the males expecting to be sent off in a day or two, and the females making out their solitary confinement, preparatory to their banishment.

LEEIN JAMIE MURDIESTON.

With the exception of one unhappy failing, delicately hinted at in the title of this sketch, there was nothing really bad in the character of Mr. James Murdieston. He was an honest, civil, inoffensive, and obliging man; but—we neither can nor will conceal the fact—a most determined inventor. Yet his lies had no malevolence in them. They were all of the vainglorious kind, and never bore reference to any man or woman's character or affairs. On the whole, as defensible as lies can be, they were also as harmless. To profession, an enlightener of the world, not as a philosopher or teacher of science, but simply as a candle-maker, he was so far a benefactor of mankind, but on a very humble scale—having only the wants of a very small village to supply with the produce of his manufacture.

With this preamble, we proceed to say, that it happened once upon a time that Jamie Murdieston had to go to Glasgow, on some particular business—we believe it was to make a purchase of tallow. On this occasion, as on all others when his presence was necessary in the western metropolis, Jamie took the coach—an opportunity which he always prized highly, as affording him admirable scope for the exercise of his talent for romancing. At home, where his propensity was well known, he could get few listeners and still fewer believers; but, on the top of a coach, where he was not known, he was always sure of finding both; and he never failed to make an excellent use of his advantage. It was a great comfort and satisfaction to Jamie, when he stumbled on an unwincing believer. It was a perfect treat to him, since it was one which he rarely enjoyed.

On the occasion of which we are speaking—namely, Jamie's visit to Glagow—he found himself, on ascending the coach, seated beside a very engaging young lady, who had preferred the outside to the inside, on account of the extreme warmth of the weather, and also for the purpose, as she herself informed Jamie, of more fully enjoying the scenery through which they might pass."

"Quite richt, mem," replied Jamie, on his fair and frank fellow-traveller informing him of this last particular, as they rolled along. "Quite right, mem; for the kintra hereawa is just uncommon beautifu—just uncommon. Do ye see, mem, that bit glisk o' the Clyde, there?—that's a spot I should mind weel, and I will mind it till the day o' my death."

"Indeed, sir!" said the young lady to whom these remarks were addressed. "Pray, what circumstance is it, may I ask, which so solemnly binds your recollections to that particular locality?"

"A melancholy aneugh ane, I assure ye mem; that's to say, it micht hae been melancholy, an it warna that Providence had sent me just in time to save the life o' a fellow-cratur."

On this communication being made to her, the young lady for whose edification it was intended discovered a degree of agitation and surprise, for which the circumstance itself would hardly account. As it escaped Jamie's notice, however, and she was aware that it did so, she merely said —"Dear me, sir, what was the occurrence you allude to, and when did it happen?" But there was an eagerness and an anxiety in her manner, when putting these queries, which she could not altogether conceal. Jamie observed it with inward satisfaction, hailing it as an assurance that whatever he might communicate would be at once taken for gospel. Feeling thus encouraged, Jamie replied—

"I'll tell ye a' aboot it, mem. Ye see it was just aboot

this time twelmonth, I think—yes, just exactly aboot this time—that, as I was ae day fishin in the Clyde, at the spot I pointed oot to ye, I was suddenly startled by hearin an awful scream, and, immediately after, a tremendous splash in the water. 'Somebody fa'en in!' says I; and I instantly flang doon my rod, on which I had, at the moment, a saumont fifty pun weeht, if he was an unce—and ran roun the bit projectin bank that had keepit me frae actually seein what had happened. Aweel, on doin this, doesna I see a woman's bonnet floatin on the water—it was a' I could see—and gaun fast doun wi' the stream, which was geyley swelled at the time. Soon becomin aware that the bonnet was on the head o' some unfortunate person, and that she maun perish in a few seconds, if no attempt was made to rescue her, I, without a moment's thocht, threw aff my coat and shoon, and jumped in after her; and, as gude luck wad hae't, was the means o' savin her life; but it was a teuch job, for, by the time I reached her, she had sunk, and it wasna till I had dived three times that I got haud o' her. But I *did* get a grup o' her; and I assure ye I held it, and never let it go till I had her safely on the bank, puir thing; and a bit bonny cratur she was."

Thus far had Jamie got in his interesting story, and much further he would have gone, had he not been suddenly interrupted by his fair auditor, who, seizing him by the hand, in a transport of joy and surprise, exclaimed—

"O my deliverer, my deliverer!—*I* was the person whom you saved; and delighted will my father, who's inside the coach, be, when he learns we have found you at last. But why, why," continued the grateful girl, looking all the gratitude she felt in Jamie's face—"why did you so abruptly and suddenly withdraw yourself, after having done such a generous and noble deed? We could never find you out, nor obtain the smallest trace of you, although hardly a day has passed since then that we have not made some attempt

to accomplish either the one or the other. It was cruel of you not to afford us an opportunity of evincing the deep and everlasting gratitude we felt towards you."

We leave the reader to conjecture what was Jamie's amazement on finding himself thus addressed by his fair companion; for we suppose we need hardly say that every word of his story about rescuing a young lady from drowning was a lie—an unmitigated, and, so far as he knew certainly, an utterly foundationless lie. Well may we then, we think, call on the reader to conceive, if he can, Jamie's surprise, when he found his narrative thus strangely converted into truth. He by no means liked it, for it threatened to lead to some awkward discoveries; and, under this impression, he endeavoured to back out, and to separate the two cases by some additional remarks.

"That's odd," he said, on the young lady's imposing on him the character of her deliverer—"verra odd," he repeated, but with considerable embarrassment in his manner; "but I dinna think ye're the young leddy I saved that day; she was a hantle stouter than you, and a guid deal aulder."

"The very same, the very same, I assure you, sir," rejoined his fair companion, laughingly. "There was nó accident of the kind you mentioned, at the place you pointed out, during all last summer, but my own. This I know, from our having lived there from the month of March to October. So you must not attempt to balk me of the happiness of believing I have found my deliverer."

Here, then, was a poser for Jamie. The young lady, it seems, was familiar with the place, and knew that no accident, except the one which, by so odd and unhappy a coincidence for Jamie's veracity, had befallen herself, had occurred there at the period he stated. He must, therefore, either confess to a lie, or quietly pocket the compliments that were thrust on him. On the latter he naturally enough determined; but he wanted no more acknowledgments, a

he found them sit on him rather awkwardly. In truth, he now began to show as great a reluctance to advert to the subject as he had before shown forwardness, and was most evidently desirous of waiving it altogether; but this his fair companion would by no means allow. She was by far too full of the extraordinary chance, and extraordinary good fortune, as she reckoned it, of having thus so strangely met with her deliverer, to allow the matter to drop.

Before going further, we may as well advert to a circumstance which may have a little startled the reader. This is, how it should have happened that Jamie's story of a rescue should have had a counterpart in fact. As to this matter, we can only vouch for its being perfectly true. It was a coincidence—certainly an odd one, but not more odd than many that have happened, and are daily occurring. The facts of the case, as we may say, were these:—The young lady's father, who was a wealthy Glasgow merchant, possessed a very pretty little cottage, which he and his family occasionally occupied during the summer months, at a short distance from the banks of the Clyde, and near to the very spot which Jamie had so unfortunately chosen as the scene of his exploit; and, still more unluckly for Jamie, it happened that the young lady in question had actually met with such an accident as that which formed the groundwork of his romance. Moreover, she had, in the case alluded to, been rescued from a watery grave by a person who chanced to be angling near the spot at the time; but this person had no sooner brought her on shore, being assured that her recovery was certain, although she appeared at the time insensible, and seen her safely in the charge of some people who had hurried to the scene of the accident, than he had suddenly and abruptly withdrawn, and was no more seen or heard of. These, then, were the facts of that case which so strangely tallied with Jamie's fiction. It is true that, had the fact and the fiction been carefully collated, a good many small

discrepancies would have appeared, that would have at once stripped Jamie of his self-assumed honours; but this not having been done, and the leading incident being the same in both, no such result took place.

To resume our story. On the arrival of the coach at Glasgow—an event to which Jamie had been looking forward with great impatience, as the only occurrence that could relieve him from his present awkward predicament—he bade his fair companion a hurried good-by, and, heedless of her remonstrances and entreaties, was hastening down the side of the coach, to make his escape, when the father of the young lady, to whom the latter had hastily communicated the discovery of her deliverer, by leaning over the top of the coach, and speaking through the upper part of the doorway, suddenly intercepted him.

"Too bad, sir, too bad," said the old gentleman, smilingly, "to try and escape us again. But we have you this time, and will take care that you do not." Saying this, Mr. Alston held out his hand to Jamie, and, on grasping the latter's, shook it with the most cordial warmth, expressing, at the same time, the deepest sense of the mighty obligation under which he lay to him, for having so nobly saved his daughter from an untimely death—"An obligation," said the good old gentleman, "which I can never repay."

"Dinna speak o't, sir, dinna speak o't," said Jamie, in the greatest embarrassment, and wishing, the while, that his tongue had been blistered when he first opened his mouth on the ill-starred subject of the rescuing. "Dinna speak o't," he said, "it't just what ae fellow-cratur should do for anither." And, having said this, Jamie was about to make a sudden bolt, when the old gentleman, perceiving his intention, dexterously hooked his arm within Jamie's right; while his daughter, who had by this time joined them, did the same by his left, and thus secured him.

"Away from us you shall not get," said Mr. Alston.

"Indeed you shall not," interposed his daughter.

"You must go home with us," resumed the former, "and receive the thanks of my dear wife, who will be delighted to see you, and those of Ellen's brothers and sisters. They are all, I assure you, as grateful to you as either I or Ellen herself can possibly be."

"Much obleeged, sir, much obleeged," stammered out Jamie, in great distress of mind; "but, ye see, it's impossible—althegither oot o' the question; for I have some important business to do, that maun be dune before I go onywhaur."

And he struggled to free himself from his captors; but in vain. They held on with a determined gripe.

"No, no, you must not leave us," exclaimed Mr Alston; "we must not lose sight of you, now that we have you. I should be sorry to be the cause of any interruption to your business; but we will not detain you an instant. I merely wish, in the meantime, to show you the way to my house, that you may find it readily when you want it, which I expect will be the moment you get your business finished."

"Really, sir, really," exclaimed Jamie, despairingly, and holding back to repress the forward movements of Mr. Alston and his daughter—"really, sir, really I canna gang. I canna on no account. The business I hae on haun maun be instantly attended to, and winna admit o' the sma'est delay."

"Well, in that case," said the pertinacious Mr. Alston, "I'll accompany you, and wait your conveniency; and Ellen here will, in the meantime, go home and apprise her mother of her having met with you, and tell her that we shall be there in—in—in what time shall I say?"

"An hour—an hour—an hour," exclaimed the perplexed romancer, in great tribulation—"say an hour."

"Well, an hour, Ellen. Tell your mother we'll be home

in an hour," said Mr. Alston; "and let her have a little supper prepared for us by that time, and let a bed be got in readiness for our dear friend here. You'll take up your quarters with us, of course," turning to Jamie.

"Oh, surely, surely—wi' great pleasure," exclaimed Jamie, hurriedly, and scarcely knowing what he said—"wi' great pleasure, but far owre meikle trouble."

"Trouble!" said Mr. Alston, contemptuously; "you, the preserver of my dear daughter's life, talk of trouble! No—no; we shall be but too happy to have you, to show you, as far as we can, the deep sense we all entertain of the unrequitable obligation we lie under to you."

"Don't lose sight of him, papa!" here exclaimed Miss Alston, in clear soft tones, as she tripped away.

"No fear, my dear—I'll hold him fast," replied her father; and, while he did so, he clutched Jamie with a still surer gripe.

Jamie now saw that the old boy was determined not to part with him until he should have run the gauntlet of the whole family's gratitude; and once more did he devoutly wish that his tongue had been anywhere but in his mouth when he first broached the unhappy story of the drowning adventure. He had never got into such a scrape before with any of his small *nouvelettes;* and he almost determined that he would never publish another—that he would henceforth deal in nothing but well-authenticated facts. The question, in the meantime, however, was, how to escape the threatened consequences of the one with which he was now entangled, and this question was a poser. There was but one way, and on this Jamie finally determined. This way was, to bolt for it—to show the old boy a pair of clean heels; and thus at once cut the connection. There was no other way of dealing with the dilemma. Having made up his mind to this proceeding, Jamie suddenly stopped at a certain close-mouth in the Trongate,

and, intimating to his escort that he had a call to make there, requested him to wait an instant till he returned.

"I'll no keep ye a minnit," said Jamie, "no ae minnit."

And, leaving the old boy to mount guard till his return, he proceeded up the close, at first leisurely; but, on gaining a turn, which concealed him from his Cerberus, he fairly took to his heels, and emerged in a distant street, to which the close led. Here Jamie drew bridle and breath together, and thanked goodness for his escape; expressing, at the same time, a fervent hope that he would never again meet with Mr. Alston or any of his family. Having thus got his head out of the noose, Jamie adjourned to the quarters which he usually occupied when he went to Glasgow; and, on the following day, sallied out to transact the business which had brought him to the city. It was not, however, with a mind perfectly at ease that Jamie went about this business; for he dreaded every moment encountering Mr. Alston or his daughter; and, under this terror, he kept a sharp look-out as he went along, always cutting suddenly across the street, when he got his eyes on any person or persons of suspicious appearance—that is, on any old gentleman or young lady who bore a real or fancied resemblance to Mr. Alston or his fair daughter; and the sequel will show that his precaution was not an unnecessary, although, alas! a vain one.

Just as he turned the corner of a street, who should Jamie see coming towards him, and at the distance of about fifty or eighty yards, but the much-dreaded Mr. Alston, his daughter, and a brother, a young man of about four-and-twenty! On recognising them, Jamie instantly stopped short, and, after a moment's reflection, determined on having again recourse to his heels—no other way of escape, as in the former instance, appearing practicable. To this proceeding Jamie was further induced by an impression that he had not been seen, or at least recognised;

but in this, as will appear, he was mistaken. However, not aware of the fact, Jamie turned quickly round, and fairly ran for it. But, as we have already hinted, he had been both seen and known by the Alstons; and they, believing his anxiety to avoid them proceeded from excessive modesty, and a timid nature that shrank from the noise of its own good deeds, resolved on compelling Jamie to submit to their acknowledgments; and, acting on this resolution, the young man (who, by the way, was provided with an admirable pair of legs for such purposes) was despatched by his father and sister in pursuit. The effect of this proceeding on Jamie, who had become aware of it, by happening to turn round for an instant during his flight, was to accelerate his speed. He flew like the wind, knocking about and overturning several people in his rapid and furious career. Thus the run continued for several minutes, when Jamie, feeling his wind failing him, and becoming thereby sensible that he could not hold out much longer, made a sudden dive up a close—one of those convenient retreats for "gentlemen in difficulties;" and, by this cleverly-executed movement, succeeded in fairly throwing out his pursuer, who, from the crowded state of the street, did not perceive the ruse, but held on his way vigorously, and afforded Jamie the inexpressible satisfaction of seeing him rush past the mouth of the entrance in which he was concealed. Feeling now in comparative satety, which, however, he further insured by going half-way up a stair, Jamie, who was a good deal blown by his exertion, took off his hat, and began wiping the perspiration from his face and forehead with his pocket-handkerchief, and doing all he could to recover his nearly exhausted breath.

"Hech," said Jamie, on beginning to respire more freely, and still wiping his face assiduously, "this has been athegither a deevil o' a job. Such a rumpus to be kicked up a' out o' nothing! Chased as if I was a mad dog! It was the maist unlucky *ane* ever I tell't but catch me again savin

onybody frae beein drooned! I'll no touch that style again in a hurry, I warrant." And with such disjointed remarks as these on his unhappy essay in his peculiar art, Jamie beguiled the short time which he thought it necessary to remain in his concealment. This expired—or, in other words, thinking the coast now clear—Jamie stole cautiously down the stair, and, on arriving at the bottom, peeped into the close before venturing out. The survey being satisfactory, Jamie emerged, and stealing down the close like a cat, repeated at the foot of it the operation of peeping round him, before taking the bold measure of stepping into the street. No enemy was in sight, Jamie drew his breath for a desperate adventure. It was a rush he meditated, which should at once carry him clear of the dangerous locality; and he accomplished it. From that hour, Jamie saw no more of the Alstons, and thus got out of the entangled web which he had woven for himself; but it was not long before he manufactured another, and a much more troublesome one.

The day on which the event in Jamie's life which we have just recorded took place, was one of great stir and excitation in Glasgow. It was the day of the execution of the Radical, Swan; whose death, on account of his crime having been a political one, was to be attended with some of the appalling ceremonies and peculiar proceedings that usually mark the execution of traitors.

Following the general current of the population which, as the hour appointed for the horrid exhibition was at hand, was drawing towards the jail, Jamie soon found himself at the place of execution. Here the general, and in some things the particular, appearance of the preparations for the approaching tragedy, showed that it was to be one of a very unusual kind. A strong party of foot-soldiers surrounded the gibbet, while the approaches at either end of the jail were occupied by dragoons, who, from the peremptory manner in which they performed their duty,

in repelling all attempts at affecting a passage by the way which they guarded, sufficiently showed that their orders had been unusually strict. The crowd and general excitement was immense.

Amongst the other objects that attracted Jamie's notice in this imposing scene, was a man holding a white horse, and standing a little way aloof from the crowd. The animal was an ordinary cart-horse, and the person who held it seemed to be a carter by profession. The situation of both seemed an odd and unsuitable one, considering attendant circumstances; and they, of course, attracted some notice, and excited some curiosity; the more so that the man looked as if he and his horse had some business there, and waiting for something or other. Jamie, among the rest, was struck with these indications, and, making up to the man, bluntly but civilly said—

"What are ye gaun to be aboot wi' the horse here, frien?"

"A job I dinna like verra weel," replied the man, whose face was pale, and lips white, with some strong internal feeling.

"What sort o' a job may that be?" inquired Jamie, his curiosity still further excited by this answer.

"If ye wait a while, ye'll see," replied the person addressed, in a manner that intimated a desire to hold no further communication on the subject. Jamie took the hint, and walked off. In less than quarter-of-an-hour after, the dense mass of human beings that surrounded the gibbet seemed all at once struck with some new and strong feeling of excitement. A suppressed cry or exclamation rolled over that immense sea of heads; and the apathy which prevailed before was exchanged for a feeling of intense eagerness and restless curiosity. The first act of the tragedy had commenced; and it was the intelligence of this that was now working its way through the crowd, and pro-

ducing the excitement alluded to. Conscious, with others, that the appalling proceedings of the occasion had opened, Jamie rushed towards the iron railings which enclosed a narrow paved way that ran round three sides of the jail, and there saw a scene more horrible than anything that even his own fertile imagination could have conceived. This was a hurdle, a machine somewhat resembling a Kamtschatkan sledge, raised slightly at either end, and to which was yoked the identical white horse, held by the head by the identical person, who had attracted Jamie's notice a short while before. Within this hurdle was seated, at one end, the executioner, with a broad, bright, short-handled axe resting on his shoulder; and opposite to him, in the other end, sat a quiet, composed-looking old man, of about sixty or sixty-five years of age. This was Swan, the unhappy man who was to suffer. In a second or two, the sledge moved on towards the scaffold; and in a second or two more Swan appeared upon the fatal platform. He was perfectly calm and collected throughout the whole of this trying scene, as was made sufficiently evident by his turning round to the executioner, and saying, with perfect composure, and an air of unconcerted simplicity, "Tammas, did ye ever see sic a crowd?" In a short time after, the miserable man was thrown off; and when he had hung about a quarter-of-an-hour or twenty minutes, three town-officers were seen to mount the scaffold and approach the body, which they immediately proceeded to lower—a ghastly spectacle, as they had to shoulder, handle, and support the corpse in the hideous operation. That operation performed, the body was placed in a position for decapitation, when suddenly another personage appeared on the scaffold. His step was quick and hurried. He wore a mask on his face, and was wrapped up in a loose black gown, which entirely concealed his person. On ascending the platform, this appalling personage, without looking to the right or left,

quickly passed his hand round or over the neck of the dead man, as if to ascertain the proper place to strike. This done, he, with the same expedition, raised the axe, and at one blow severed the head from the body, and instantly thereafter glided from the scaffold, as mysteriously and rapidly as he had ascended it; the whole being the work of not more, perhaps, than a minute.

All this, then, Jamie Murdieston saw, and it struck him with horror. But will the reader believe that it should have been the means of getting him into another of his lying predicaments? All will think, we daresay, that it should have had a very opposite effect, and have rather laid than aroused the fibbing spirit that was within him. But, verily, such was not the case.

On the evening of the same day, Jamie betook himself to a coffee-room, to spend an hour, which he found hanging heavy on his hands, in taking a peep of the papers, and listening to the varied and desultory conversations which are usually to be heard in such places of resort. Being of a social and communicative disposition, Jamie soon began to take a share in the general talk. This talk, for the most part, as might be expected, bore reference to the recent execution, and to the popular movements out of which it had arisen.

"I'll tell you what it is," said Jamie, who was at this particular moment pretty considerably muzzed—"I'll tell ye what it is," he said, addressing two men who sat opposite him, and with whom he had got into familiar conversation—"the government had better no try ony mair o' thae tricks" (meaning executions for political offences), "or they'll maybe get their kail through the reek. There's mair mischief brewin in the country than they're aware o'."

"Faith, it's just as ye say, frien," said one of the persons spoken to. "There *is* some wark gaun on that'll bother the big-wigs at Lunnun, when the proper time comes. But

we're no just ripe yet. Onything doin amang the *Friends* in your pairt o' the country?"

"We're gettin on cannily, but surely," replied Jamie, with a significant look to the querist. Then, with a wink, pregnant with mysterious intelligence—"I ken twa or three things aboot thae matters that haena been cried at the cross."

On this, one of the men opposite Jamie stretched himself across the table, and whispered in his ear—

"Are ye headin ony movement in your quarter, noo?"

Jamie replied with an expressive nod, and a look of great importance; but did not think it necessary, or perhaps safe, to speak.

"Gie's yer haun, my frien," said the man who had whispered in Jamie's ear, with an air of high-wrought enthusiasm. "I honour you for your principles," he added, shaking, with great cordiality, the hand that was extended to him, and at the same time turning off the contents of his glass to Jamie's success.

"Thank ye, frien—thank ye," said Jamie, who, the reader will see, had all at once set up for a Radical leader. "I'll tell ye what," he continued, now leaning over the table towards his cronies, and speaking in a cautiously low tone—"as I see ye're friens o' the guid cause, I'll gie ye some intelligence that ye'll be glad aneugh to hear, I daresay. We're, ye see, a hunner strong in oor quarter, and as fine a set o' stout, resolute fallows as ye wad wish to see, and a' ready to turn oot at a moment's notice. I'm their captain, ye see. They hae done me the honour o' makin me their captain—a very unworthy, but a very willin ane. But, ah! sirs, we had a sad fecht to get arms; and they wad never hae been gotten an I hadna advanced a hunner poun oot o' my ain pouch; takin bills frae the committee for the amount, payable oot o' the first and readiest whan a's settled."

"I'm sure *the* cause is much indebted to ye," here inter-

rupted one of Jamie's new friends. "And hoo are ye armed noo, then?"

"Ou, pretty weel—pretty weel," replied Jamie—"maistly pikes; for, ye see, wi' oor sma' funds, we couldna touch firearms, although there's a few o' thae among us too. But oor pikes 'll be found troublesome things, I'm thinkin. They're made after a fashion o' my ain invention. This is the shape, ye see." And here Jamie dipped his forefinger into his tumbler, and therewith proceeded to draw the figure of a very formidable-looking weapon on the table. "That, ye see, is for stabbin, and that's for cuttin, and that's for hookin, and that's for knockin doon," continued Jamie, pointing out the various properties of the complex instrument. "Winna that be a botherer?"

"My feth, in guid hauns it'll be that," responded one of Jamie's friends; and added, "Are ye drillin hard?"

"Every nicht that we hae the least glint o' moonshine," replied Jamie, without a moment's hesitation. "I gie them twa hours o't every nicht, and am teachin them a new sort o' pike exercise, that 'll be fand, if I'm no mistaen, particularly effectual in keepin off horse."

"Where learned ye the use o' that weapon, sir, if I may take the liberty of asking?" inquired the former querist.

Few questions found Jamie unprepared with an answer.

"I'll tell ye that, frien," he replied. "It was in the Lancers. I was nine years a serjeant in that corps, which I left after the battle of Waterloo, in consequence o' a severe wound I got in that engagement. But what's come o' yer frien?" here said Jamie, suddenly interrupting himself, and now adverting, for the first time, to the absence of the companion of the person whom he addressed, and who had slipped out, without saying anything, about a quarter-of-an-hour before.

"He'll be here in a minute," was the reply; and the calculation was perfectly correct. In about a minute, the man

appeared, but not alone. He was now accompanied by three most equivocal-looking persons.

"That's your man," he said, with an inclination of his head towards Jamie Murdieston.

"Friend," said one of the strangers, laying his hand on Jamie's shoulder, "you'll come along with us, if you please."

"Alang wi' you!" exclaimed Jamie, in the utmost amazement. "I wad like to ken whar and what for, first."

"We'll let you know all that by and by, friend," replied the spokesman of the party; "but, in the meantime, you *must* go with us; so there's no use in palavering about it."

"I'll be hanged if I do, then," said Jamie, resolutely, "till I ken what for. 'Od, this is a pretty business! Do you tak me to be a robber or a murderer?"

"No, but we take you to be a traitor, a conspirer against the government, and a leaguer with its enemies; and as such I apprehend you," said the spokesman, at the same time collaring Jamie, and calling on his assistants to aid him in making a forcible capture of his person. The call was instantly obeyed. Jamie was seized on all sides, at one and the same instant of time, and, despite of a loud and most earnest denial of all hostility to the government, or of ever having in any way or manner whatever aided in disturbing the peace of the realm, was dragged out of the apartment, and finally snugly deposited in an airy cell in the city jail.

On being left to himself, Jamie, in no very happy mood, seated himself on a bench that ran along the wall, threw one leg over the other, planted his elbow on his knee, and, supporting his head with his hand, began to entertain himself with some reflections on the very extraordinary predicament into which he had been thus so suddenly and unexpectedly thrown.

"Preserve us, this is awfu!" said Jamie. "Waur a great deal than the droonin business. What the deevil tempted

me to speak such nonsense? But wha could hae thocht this wad hae come o't? A bit harmless piece o' falderal. Yon twa maun hae been a pair o' infernal scoundrels—that's clear; and as clear is it that I'm in a most wickedly-awkward situation. I maun, I suppose, either submit to be hanged peaceably, or confess that I hae been tellin a most unconscionable lee—no a very pleasant alternative; but the last's better than the first, I reckon."

Jamie's communings were at this time interrupted by the entrance of the jailer, who came to see that all was right for the night.

"Man," said Jamie, addressing him, and trying to smile graciously, in order to propitiate his good-will, "this is a queer business."

"I rather think you'll find it so," replied the jailer, coolly, and unaffected by Jamie's soothing advances. "Both a queer business, and a serious one."

"It was a' a joke, man," said Jamie.

"Perhaps so," said the jailer; "but, like many other jokes, you may chance to find it attended with rather awkward consequences." And, without saying more, the man banged to the door with a violence that made the long passage on which it opened ring with an iron sound, and left Jamie to find what repose he might.

"The fallow 'll no believe me," he said, on being again left to himself, "nae mair than if he kent me."

On the following morning, Jamie was conducted in procession, by three or four criminal officers, into the presence of the Procurator-Fiscal, when a precoguition on his case immediately ensued.

"Well, sir," said the latter, at the same time referring to a paper which lay on his desk before him, "so you have taken up arms against the government."

"Naething o' the kind, my lord, I assure you," said Jamie.

"What, sir! do you mean to deny your spontaneous ac-

knowledgment of the fact, made last night in the presence of two credible witnesses?"

"Indeed do I, my lord."

"Why, you *may*," replied the fiscal, emphatically; "but, I fear, it will do no good. Have you not mustered a body of armed men, or at least taken the command of such a body, with the intention of overthrowing the government of the country?—and have you not furnished them with funds to procure arms?—and are you not in the habit of training them nightly, as their captain, or leader, in military exercises?—and ——"

"It's a' a lee, my lord—a lee frae beginnin to end," here interposed Jamie, earnestly. "I just spoke a' that nonsense for a bit o' diversion. It's just a way I hae, you see" (thus delicately did Jamie allude to his failing), "o' amusin mysel and my friens."

"Oh, then, you mean to deny *in toto*," said the fiscal. "In that case, we must adopt other proceedings; and, in the meantime, you return to jail."

To his old quarters, accordingly, Jamie was forthwith carried, and there lay for three entire days, until the result of the inquiries which were set on foot established that he was indeed no traitor, but a most inveterate and incorrigible liar. It is said, however, that Jamie, after this, was a great deal more cautious as to the nature and character of his romances, and as to the when, where, and to whom they were promulgated.

DUNCAN M'ARTHUR.

In the year 1778, Mr M'Donald, an extensive West India planter, from the island of Jamaica, came to Scotland, on a visit to his friends and relations in the West Highlands; amongst whom he spent several months, going from place to place, living a week or two here, and a week or two there, as chance or other circumstances directed.

During one of these migrations, this gentleman came one day, accidentally, in a solitary place on the banks of Loch Awe, on a little kilted, barelegged, and bareheaded Highland boy, busily employed in launching a little fleet of paper-sailed boats on the lake. The situation in which Mr M'Donald was at the moment placed, was one of those which strongly predispose one to enter into conversation with whomsoever chance may throw in the way, without much regard to age, sex, or appearance. The day was delightful—it was in the middle of June; the place lonely, and the scenery around of the most sublime and beautiful kind—the most beautiful, perhaps, in the Highlands of Scotland; and this, as our readers know, is no mean character of its perfections. These were the circumstances, then, in which Mr M'Donald was placed on the occasion to which we have alluded, and on him they had the effect which they would have had on anybody else—namely, that of opening up the sympathies of his nature, of extinguishing the littleness of pride, and of inducing one general feeling of benevolence; and it was in this happy frame of mind that he now reined in his horse, and accosted the young stranger.

"Well, my little fellow," he said, "what's this you're about?"

The boy looked up in his face, and blushed and smiled at the same time, but made no reply, conceiving one unnecessary, as his employment was sufficiently evident. There was in that single look of the boy's, however, an expression of openness and intelligence that at once caught Mr M'Donald's fancy; and he immediately added, good-naturedly, "Where are all these ships going to?"

The boy again looked up in his face and laughed, but now vouchsafed a reply:—

"To the West Indies, sir, for cargoes of rum and sugar."

This was spoken in pretty fair English, though strongly tinctured with the Celtic accent.

"Indeed!" rejoined Mr M'Donald; "my word, but you are an extensive trader, if it be the case, as I have no doubt it is, that all these fine ships are your own. What's your name, my little fellow?"

"Duncan M'Arthur, sir."

"Are you at school?"

"Yes, sir; I'm just now on my way home from it."

"What are you learning there?"

"English, writing, and arithmetic."

"Can you write pretty well?"

"Ou ay, sir—middlin."

"Count?"

"Ay—middlin, too, sir."

"That's a clever fellow. How should you like, now, to go abroad, and see the world? How should you like to go where you have just now sent these ships?

"It's mysel, sir, wad like it weel," said the boy, his sharp, intelligent little eye brightening with the idea; "but my faither couldna want me for herdin the cows, and helpin him wi' his peats."

"Where does your father live, my boy?" inquired Mr M'Donald.

"At the Ferry o' Bunaw, sir."

It was within half-a-mile of the house to which the latter was just going, and where he intended stopping for a few days, previous to his leaving the country for good and all.

"Well, my little fellow," he said, "I am going to Blackhouse. You know it, I fancy?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, call upon me there to-morrow forenoon. Ask for Mr M'Donald. I wish to speak further with you."

The boy promised, and Mr M'Donald rode off.

Now, it would not be easy for us to say what were the latter's intentions regarding the little barelegged boy; and for this simple reason—that he did not well know himself. He had, however, taken a fancy to the boy—that is certain—and felt a disposition to do him a service, although he had not yet thought of what nature this should be, or how it was to be done. He had, in truth, no definite views on the subject; but he had not ridden far, when these began to assume something of a tangible shape, and this was, to take the boy into his service as a personal attendant, provided his parents should agree to it.

True to his appointment, little Duncan waited next day on Mr M'Donald, his face well washed, and his hair carefully combed over his forehead.

"Ah, Duncan, are you there?" said the latter, on his entering the apartment where he was. "I'm glad to see you. You said yesterday, Duncan, that you would like to go abroad."

"Weel wad I like that, sir," replied the little bare-breeched Highlander, "if my faither could spare me."

"Did you speak to your father on the subject, Duncan?"

"I tell't him that I met you, sir, and what you said."

"Ay; and what did he say, my little fellow?"

"He said, sir, 'The shentleman's been shoking you, Duncan; but ye may go down to Blackhouse, as he pade you, and see what he has to say.'"

And Duncan looked at Mr M'Donald as if he would be glad himself to know whether there was anything of a joke in the matter. Indeed, it was for this purpose that he repeated his father's words, cunningly availing himself of them to elicit the information he wanted.

"Joking you, Duncan!" repeated Mr M'Donald, smiling. "By no means; and of this I'll soon convince both you and your father."

Having said this, he took up his hat and stick, and desired the boy to conduct him to his father's.

The house was one of the poorest class; and it was evident, from everything within and around it, that it was a hard struggle with its occupants to make, as the saying has it, "the two ends to meet."

Having found Duncan's father, Mr M'Donald explained to him his views regarding his son. These were readily acceded to by both the boy's parents, who, though they sorely grudged to part with their little Duncan, yet saw that it might be for his advantage, and therefore felt themselves called on to sacrifice their own feelings in a case which seemed to involve his future welfare. At this interview it was settled, in short, that he should enter the service of Mr M'Donald, and of course leave the country with him when he went.

Three days after this, Duncan bade farewell to his parents and the home of his childhood. His patron was about to set out for Greenock, and there to embark for Jamaica. The parting was a bitter one. His father clasped him in his arms; and, while those tears, which no danger to himself, and no sufferings merely his own, could ever have drawn from him, streamed down his rugged cheeks, he fervently and solemnly prayed, in Gaelic—in his own impressive language—for a blessing on his child.

"When I have had such a parting as this, Duncan," he said, afterwards—"and many of them I've had with my

brethren, and with more remote but still dear friends—it was the honour of our country and our name that caused the separation. They had girded on the sword, and went to seek distinction in the ranks of war, and on the field of battle. They went to be soldiers, Duncan; and I could wish that you had been now following their footsteps. But it may be better as it is. Your days may be more, though your reputation should be less. A different destiny seems meted out for you."

But it was in the case of his mother that the parting of little Duncan was most affecting. She held the boy to her bosom, as if she meant that he should never again leave it, and loaded him with all the tender epithets which her memory could supply, and with which the Gaelic language so much abounds. On exhausting these, she proceeded to deplore the approaching separation from her child, in that affecting strain, at once metaphorical and poetical, peculiar to her country on such and similar occasions.

"This day, my Duncan," she said, "the light of the sun is obscured to your mother's eyes, and he shines not as he did before. The green woods have lost their verdure, and the once sparkling waters of the fountain their brightness. A dark cloud is on the face of the sun, that will long, long remain, though none but your mother's eye will see it; a blight, that she alone can perceive, is on the lovely woods of Ardmoran; and, pure though the waters of the fountain may appear to others, to her, Duncan, they will henceforth seem soiled and discoloured."

Such was the figurative language in which Duncan's mother went on to describe her feelings as they were, and as she anticipated they would be; and such was the strain in which she deplored the impending separation from her child.

But this could be but of short duration. The moment of final separation arrived, and Duncan hastened to rejoin his

master, who was about to embark in a small sailing vessel (there being then no steamboats on the Clyde) for Greenock.

On going up the river, the boy was observed by the captain of the vessel leaning ever the side, and gazing with the most earnest attention at something on the shore. The man's curiosity was excited by the circumstance, and he asked him what he was looking at so intently.

"Oh, sir," replied Duncan, with great simplicity of manner, "I'm looking at yon beautiful hoose yonder," pointing to a handsome house that stood amidst an embowering wood on the face of a gentle acclivity. "It's the bonniest I ever saw."

"Yes, my man, it's a very fine house," replied the skipper. "Should you like to live in such a house as that?"

The boy looked up in his face and smiled—"That I would, sir; and, if I had plenty of money, I would buy't, for I have never seen such a pretty place."

"Why, man," replied the good-natured seaman, "perhaps you may be able to buy it yet, or at least as good."

Duncan smiled, and shook his head; but, from this moment, the vision of that house took possession of the boy's fancy, by one of those unaccountable and uncontrollable emotions of the mind, which all must have felt in particular instances; and, as long as he lived, he never forgot it. It haunted him in his sleep, and was the frequent resting-point of his memory, when far away in a foreign land. It was, indeed, a boyish fancy; but it was one of those enduring ones that no vicissitudes of after-life have power to efface, but that, on the contrary, grow the brighter, the further they are removed by distance or by time.

Shortly after arriving in Greenock, Duncan's nether man was arrayed, for the first time, in a pair of inexpressibles, and the kilt thrown aside. To these were added a trim, short coat, ornamented with the M'Donald livery; and a smart hat, adorned with a gold band—and thus was the first step of Duncan's metamorphosis completed.

For some time, the trousers bothered him a good deal, as they felt extremely tight and uncomfortable—not allowing his limbs that freedom of motion which they enjoyed in such perfection beneath the airy envelopes of the kilt; but he in time got used to them, and even allowed latterly that they were a very good contrivance.

Previous to this, however—that is, previous to striking the kilt—Duncan had made several excursions around the town, his master having left him in the hands of the tailor, and gone to see some friends in Glasgow, where he meant to spend a day or two before embarking. One of these excursions included a visit to that paradise of a place that had caught his eye in coming up the Clyde. It was only three or four miles distant; and he found it, on a nearer inspection, all that his fancy had conceived it from a more distant view. But Duncan's curiosity prompting him to venture farther into the enclosed grounds than was permitted to strangers, he was seen by one of the guardians of the place; and his kilt not increasing the man's notions of his respectability, or of the innocency of his intentions, he gave him chase, with a loud whoop and holloa. Duncan saw the enemy approaching, and took to his heels, and finally succeeded in clearing the outermost fence, just in time to save himself from a good drubbing.

This incident, on which he had by no means calculated, disturbed his ideas of his Elysium a little, and convinced him that the beauties he so much admired were not at all intended for the enjoyment of such poor little ragged rascals as himself—that they were reserved for the great and the wealthy alone.

Some days after this, Duncan embarked, with his master, for Jamaica, where they arrived safely, at the end of about the usual period consumed in that voyage. And with this event the first act of our little drama closes. The curtain is dropped, and a distinct division in the story is marked.

A brief interval, and the curtain is again raised; but by no means so brief is the time that elapses in the progress of our tale—for this is no less than thirty years.

It was, then, on a fine summer day, precisely thirty years after Duncan M'Arthur had embarked with his master for Jamaica, that a splendid carriage, with servants in livery, was seen rolling along the Gourock road. On coming opposite a certain gate, which led to a handsome house on the face of a low hill (it was the same house which had so much taken the fancy of the little barelegged Highland boy thirty years before), the carriage stopped, and the gentleman who occupied it, seemingly attracted by a large board suspended from a tree, stepped out and read on the latter—"This house and adjoining property on sale."

Having obtained this piece of information, he opened the gate, and walked leisurely up towards the house, carefully examining the grounds as he went along. On arriving in front of the mansion, he was accosted by a feeble old man, who approached him with the most profound respect; and, bowing low, inquired if he wished to inspect the premises. The stranger looked hard for some seconds at the querist, without making any reply; but at length answered, "Yes, my honest man, I do wish to look at the premises. The house and grounds are on sale, I see."

"They are, sir," replied the old man—"and a bonny spot it is."

"The place certainly looks very well," replied the gentleman. "Is the house in good repair?"

"Excellent, sir. The factor, Mr M'Ausline, keeps a' in guid order, baith without and within; kennin it's the only way to bring a customer."

"Ah! he's right there."

The stranger, conducted by the old man, now went through every room in the house, and examined them with a care and minuteness that showed he entertained serious

intentions regarding the property. The house inspected, he proceeded to the garden, looked into all the outhouses, and made a general survey of the grounds in the immediate neighbourhood of the house. This done, he slipped a crown-piece into the old man's hand, and returned to his carriage, which was waiting him where he had left it.

On the next day, the very same carriage of which we have spoken drew up before Mr M'Ausline's door; and the lackey having rung the bell, and ascertained that that person was within, the same gentleman who had occupied it on the preceding day jumped out, and entered the house.

On being ushered into the apartment in which Mr M'Ausline was—

"You have, sir, I believe," he said, "the management of the sale of Bellevue House and grounds?"

"I have, sir."

"Well, Mr M'Ausline, I have been looking at them; and if you and I can come to terms, it is not unlikely that I may become the purchaser."

Mr M'Ausline bowed.

"What is the upset price, sir?"

"Twenty-five thousand pounds, sir."

"A long price."

"Why, sir, it's well worth the money," said the factor.

"Perhaps it may, sir; but let me look at the plans, &c., if you please."

They were immediately produced, and, in a few minutes, the stranger and Mr M'Ausline were up to the elbows in papers; the former examining every document connected with the property, and the latter explaining and enlarging on each as it came under investigation.

At the conclusion of this scrutiny, the stranger rose to depart, saying, at the same time, to Mr M'Ausline, that he would hear from him in a day or two.

Just as he was going away, the latter asked, with some

hesitation of manner, as if he feared the question might be thought rude, if he would have the goodness to favour him with his name.

"Dear me," replied the stranger, "how stupid that I did not think of mentioning that of my own accord! It is one of the first things I should have communicated to you. My name, sir, is M'Arthur—Duncan M'Arthur, late of the Island of Jamaica."

Mr M'Ausline bowed low at the name; for, although he did not know Mr M'Arthur personally, it was one with which he was familiar, and which he knew was that of one of the wealthiest men in the West Indies. Need we add, that this Mr M'Arthur was no other than the little kilted, barelegged Highland boy whom we introduced to the reader at the outset of our story.

How he arrived at the high degree of prosperity which he now enjoyed, we shall make known before we have done; but, in the meantime, we shall conduct his transaction with M'Ausline to a close.

Agreeably to his promise, Mr M'Arthur again called on that gentleman, at the expiry of about a week, and having previously satisfied himself of the value of the property in dependence, concluded the purchase, and paid down the money.

On the very same day, he went down again to Bellevue, which was now his, the identical house which had so much struck his fancy when a boy.

On this occasion, he was again attended by the old man of whom we have already spoken.

"Well," said Mr M'Arthur, on the latter approaching him, "I have concluded the purchase for this place. The money is paid, and it is now mine."

"I'm glad to hear it, sir, and long may you live to enjoy it!" replied the old man.

"Thank you, my friend—thank you. What's your name?"

"James Moffat, sir."

"Ay, well, James," continued Mr M'Arthur, "do you recollect of chasing a little barelegged Highland boy out of these grounds one day, about—let me see—ay, I daresay it will be about thirty years since? See, there," he added, pointing to a particular piece of ground—"there is the very spot on which he stood when you discovered him; and there" (pointing to a particular part of the fence which enclosed the grounds) "is precisely the place where he escaped you. Do you recollect of this, James?"

The old man thought for a moment; then looking in Mr M'Arthur's face, and smiling, "Yes, sir, now that you remind me of it, I do recollect the circumstance, and very distinctly. The little fellow had come, I thought, to carry off some of our hens and chickens, as we were then, and are yet, very much annoyed by young depredators of that description. But may I ask your honour how your honour happens to know so well about that affair?"

"Troth, James," replied Mr M'Arthur, laughing, "I have good cause to know well about it; for that boy was no other than myself, James."

James looked unutterable things on this announcement being made to him, and could only come out with the words —"Impossible, sir! It canna be."

"Nothing at all impossible in it, my honest friend," replied Mr M'Arthur, again laughing. "It was indeed I, James; but I deny having had any felonious intentions on your hens and chickens, or anything whatever belonging to you. It was curiosity alone that prompted me. I was struck, boy as I was, with the beauties of the place, and had just taken the liberty of coming in to enjoy them a little."

"Aweel, sir, the like o' this I never heard o', or met wi', or onybody else, I daresay. Wha wad ever hae thocht or dreamt o' such a thing?"

"It is certainly rather odd, my friend," said Mr M'Arthur; "but you know it has been often said, and truly, that more strange things have happened in real life than ever were invented by story-tellers."

"I've often heard that, sir," replied the old man; "and I consider this a very remarkable proof o't."

"Yes, James," continued Mr M'Arthur, "at the moment when you discovered me, a barefooted and barelegged boy, trespassing on your premises, I had just formed the resolution which I have this day, at the distance of thirty years, carried into effect. I had then determined that I should purchase this property, if ever I became rich enough to do so. But," added Mr M'Arthur, smiling, "every dog has his day, James. You turned me off the grounds when you had the power, and you will not think it unreasonable, now that I have it, if I turn you off—ch?"

The poor old man looked a little disconcerted at this speech; not being quite sure whether it was spoken in jest or earnest.

"I canna say, sir," he said, looking at the querist doubtingly, and with a forced smile, "but what it wad be but fair."

Mr M'Arthur saw the uneasiness which his joke had created, and hastened to relieve the old man's fears, by assuring him that he was welcome to remain on the property, rent free, as long as he chose; and not only that, but that he should have every indulgence and accommodation which he might require.

Having brought our story to this point, we now return to trace the course of those events which raised Mr M'Arthur from the humble station in which he began life, to be one of the wealthiest of our colonial merchants.

Some time after his arrival in the West Indies, the junior clerk in Mr M'Donald's counting-house died; and the latter, having found Duncan an active, smart, and scrupulously

honest lad, and, moreover, possessing the qualification of writing a fair hand, together with that of a pretty competent knowledge of figures, he at once proposed to him to take the place of the deceased clerk.

Duncan readily closed with the proposal, threw off his livery, laid down his towel, and mounted the stool, quill in hand. In this situation, he remained for three years, discharging his duties greatly to the satisfaction of his employer. At the end of the period above named, the clerk immediately above him also died, and Duncan, as a matter of course, stepped into his place, in which he continued to distinguish himself by his steadiness and abilities, and by the general excellence of his moral character—virtues which eventually raised him, step by step, to the responsible situation of head clerk of the firm.

Two or three years after he had attained this promotion, however, an event occurred that gave him a much more rapid lift than was likely to proceed from the ordinary course of events.

Having, about the end of the period alluded to, gone into the interior of the island on some business of his employer, an insurrection of the negroes had in the meantime occurred, and involved the whole country in terror and alarm. When Mr M'Arthur left home, all was quiet, and nothing of the kind suspected; nor indeed did he know anything of it, until some ruinous sugar-mills and deserted plantations, which he passed on his way homewards, informed him of the fearful event. As yet, he had seen none of the insurgents themselves—a fortunate circumstance for him; for, if they had fallen in with him, they would, to a certainty, have murdered him. Aware of this, and also guessing at the general state of the country, Mr M'Arthur hastened homewards with all speed; but his journey was considerably lengthened by the necessity he was under of taking by-paths and circuitous routes, to avoid any straggling parties of the insur-

gents who might be wandering about. Notwithstanding all the haste he could make, therefore, and though well mounted, night overtook him long before he could reach Kingston, the place of his destination; and, to make matters worse, he was benighted in a wild and remote woody strath, at the base of the Blue Mountains, which had long been famous as the haunt of runaway negroes, and where, from the inaccessible nature of the surrounding heights, they were enabled to defy all the force that could be brought against them.

It was now pitch dark, and Mr M'Arthur, not well knowing his way, was guiding his horse slowly and cautiously through the intricacies of the place, when a wild whooping and yelling, which he knew to proceed from an assemblage of negroes, suddenly struck on his ear, and filled him with apprehensions for his safety, as he was totally unarmed—although this was, perhaps, a matter of no great importance, for resistance would have been vain against such odds as he had no doubt the number of the negroes presented.

On hearing the cries alluded to, and which seemed to proceed from persons at no great distance, Mr M'Arthur reined in his horse, and advanced still more warily than before. His progress, however, slow as it was, brought him round the base of the high projecting rock that covered the entrance to an extensive green hollow, from the upper end of which again rose a precipitous wall of rock, on whose summit, a kind of natural platform, were assembled the negroes whose cries he had heard. They had kindled a large fire, and around this they were capering and dancing with a wildness of glee, to which—as Mr M'Arthur judged, from the outrageous and unsteady manner of most of them—rum had largely contributed.

The sight was an alarming one to a person in Mr M'Arthur's situation; but he was a man of strong nerve

and singular resolution, and he therefore determined to ascertain precisely what the negroes were about, and, if possible, whose they were. That they were a party of the insurrectionists he had no doubt; and he therefore thought it not unlikely that, if he could approach them without being perceived, he might gather some information regarding their intended future proceedings, or regarding what they had already done, that might be turned to good account.

Having come to this resolution, he dismounted, secured his horse to a tree, and advanced cautiously on foot to the bottom of the rocks on the summit of which the negroes were assembled. On reaching the position, he looked upward, and saw that the ascent was both a difficult and a dangerous one; but not having yet forgot the practice he had had in such feats in the Highlands, he determined on attempting it; and this he did with such success, that he, in a very short time, found himself—his head, at any rate—on a level with the ground occupied by the negroes, and within a very few yards of them. On obtaining a view over the edge of the cliff, the first thing that attracted Mr M'Arthur's attention was a naked cutlass lying on the grass, and fully within his reach. Of this weapon he determined to possess himself and, by watching a fitting opportunity, he succeeded in getting hold of it unobserved, when he drew it gently towards him, and found his confidence greatly increased by the timeous acquisition. The most remarkable object that presented itself to the daring adventurer's notice, was a slender female figure, wrapped up in a large, light-coloured cashmere shawl, and who was wildly but vainly struggling to free herself from the grasp of a stout, ferocious-looking negro, who had thrown his arms around her, and was evidently forcing himself on her as a lover, grinning hideously in her face, as he sputtered away at the gibberish which he intended for the language of love.

Mr M'Arthur saw at once that the lady—for such she had every appearance of being—was a captive in the hands of the ruffians; probably, he thought, the daughter of some of their masters, whose property they had laid waste; and his blood boiled within him at witnessing the indignities to which the unfortunate girl was exposed; and he determined on making a desperate effort to save her.

Grasping his cutlass firmly in his hand, he leaped, with one spring, on the level groud occupied by the negroes; and waving on high his weapon, which flashed in the ruddy light of the fire, shouted out, as if he were supported by others—"Here they are!—down with the villains! Shoot them! shoot them!" And he dashed into the middle of the band, and with one blow of his cutlass struck the ruffian whose arm was round the female to the earth, a dead man.

The ruse of M'Arthur, in the meantime, took completely. The negroes, believing that a large force was comirg on them, fled with the utmost precipitation in all directions, leaving the gallant adventurer, with the captive lady, sole possessors of the field. But the former, judging that they would soon return on finding that he was alone, ran up to the terrified girl, and taking her hurriedly by the hand, without waiting to put any questions to her, or even to look at her, urged her to fly with him instantly.

Aware of the propriety of this measure, the later instantly obeyed; and taking her deliverer by the arm, both hastened away from the spot. But M'Arthur, being wholly unacquainted with the locality of the place, knew no other way of escaping but that by which he had come; and by this way it was impossible the fragile, timorous creature he supported could go. But M'Arthur was a stout, as well as courageous man; and in this dilemma he did not hesitate an instant in adopting the only course which presented itself.

He suddenly flung his left arm around the slender waist of his fair companion, and, raising her from the ground, pro-

ceeded to descend the rocks with her; holding on, from time to time, with his right hand, as he passed from one stepping place to another.

Steady of step, stout of heart, and quick of eye, M'Arthur descended in safety with his precious burden; when, having placed her on her feet, he, with one single word, urged her further flight till they arrived at the spot where his horse was secured.

Nor had the flight of the fugitives been a whit more expeditious than was necessary; for ere they had gained the bottom of the descent, the negroes, as M'Arthur conjectured they would do, had returned; and seemingly now assured that they had been deceived, began to search around, whooping and yelling in the most frightful manner, for their deceiver and his companion.

Indeed, they appeared at one time to have discovered them, or at least to have conjectured which route they had taken; for several shots were fired in the direction in which they were—a fact which the fugitives ascertained by two or three bullets striking within a few yards of them.

On reaching his horse, M'Arthur unloosed him, sprung on his back, and quick as thought, lifted the lady behind him; and having secured her to himself, by passing a silk neckcloth around both, continued his flight—at first cautiously, till he cleared the loose stones and brushwood with which the place was encumbered; and then at full speed for the distance of eight or ten miles, when, being aware of his near approach to Kingston, and, consequently, to a situation of comparative safety, he reined in the exhausted animal; and it was now that an extraordinary denouement connected with the fate and fortunes of the fugitives took place. It was now, and not till now—for circumstances had hitherto permitted no conversation between them—that M'Arthur learned who the lady was whom he had so gallantly rescued from the brutality of the rebel negroes.

Having checked the speed of his horse, M'Arthur turned round to his fair companion, and said, "May I now ask, madam, to whom I have had the honour of doing this little piece of service to-night?"

"Don't you know me, Mr M'Arthur?" was the reply, in a soft and gentle tone, not unmingled with surprise that, as the speaker had recognised her deliverer, she had not been recognised by him.

"No, indeed, madam," said M'Arthur, turning again round, but now with a look of intense curiosity; for, although his answer had been in the negative, the tones of the voice were familiar to him.

"Don't you know Miss M'Donald—Flora M'Donald—Mr M'Arthur?" rejoined the lady, smiling.

"Gracious heaven! is it possible?" exclaimed Mr M'Arthur, now aware that she who spoke to him was no other than the daughter of his employer, between whom and himself there had long been a secret and unavowed attachment—an attachment which they had never breathed to each other, but which did not the less certainly exist.

The exclamation of surprise and delight—for this feeling was also strongly expressed in it—which we have just recorded, Mr M'Arthur followed up, by inquiring how she had come into the dreadful situation in which he had found her.

This Miss M'Donald briefly explained, by stating that a party of insurgent negroes had attacked her father's premises, burned his mills to the ground, plundered his house, and, on their retreat, had carried her along with them.

Much more than this passed between the lovers, thus strangely brought together; but we do not think it necessary to record it; and, therefore, not to interrupt the progress of our story, we proceed to land them safely at Mr M'Donald's residence, a short distance from Kingston, where Mr M'Arthur left his fair charge, and proceeded

himself to the town just named—Mr M'Donald being there at the moment, on some matters connected with the insurrection. On his finding the latter—

"Oh, Mr M'Arthur!" he exclaimed, in great agitation and distress of mind, "isn't this a dreadful business! I'm ruined—ruined for ever! I can no longer hold up my head—I can no longer be good for anything in this world!"

"Dear me, sir," said M'Arthur, "has the destruction of your property been so great?"

"Destruction of my property!" reiterated Mr M'Donald; "no—no; that is nothing—nothing at all. A few thousands will repair that. It's the loss of my daughter I bewail—my poor, dear Flora!" And he burst into tears. "You have doubtless heard, Mr M'Arthur," he continued, after a short while, "that the ruffians have carried her off, God knows whither; and her death—worse than her death—is, I fear, certain."

"Mr M'Donald," said Mr M'Arthur, "be no longer under any uneasiness regarding your daughter. She is safe, and at this moment under her father's roof, unscathed, unharmed."

"How, Mr M'Arthur?" exclaimed the distracted father, in wild excitement; "my daughter safe—my daughter at home! Surely you do not dare to deceive me? Swear to the truth of it—swear to the truth of it, M'Arthur, and half my fortune is yours!"

"I will, without hesitation, swear to the truth of it, sir, if you desire it, certainly, and on much easier terms than you propose. But let me first tell you what has happened.'

And he proceeded to detail the whole circumstances of his adventure with the insurgent negroes, as has been already related.

When he had done, Mr M'Donald, whose feelings had been wrought to the highest pitch by the narrative, flew towards him, folded him in his arms, and said—

"God bless and prosper you, Mr M'Arthur, for what you have this day done to me and mine!"

It was all he could say. His emotion prevented further utterance.

Impatient to see his daughter, the happy father, accompanied by M'Arthur, now hastened home; and the interview between parent and child, which instantly followed, was most affecting. Flora rushed into her father's arms, exclaiming—

"My dear father!"

She could say no more, and buried her head in his bosom.

"Thank God—thank God, my child, that I see you again safe!" fervently ejaculated her father, at the same time straining the beloved being of whom he spoke to his bosom.

After the lapse of a few minutes, and when the emotion of both had a little subsided, taking his daughter by the hand, Mr M'Donald led her towards her deliverer—who stood looking out of a window at the farther end of the apartment, that he might not seem to witness the expression of their feelings—and, on coming up to him, said, smiling as he spoke—

"Mr M'Arthur, I promised you the half of my fortune, if the intelligence you brought me of Flora's safety were true, and I did this without being aware that I was indebted to you for that inexpressible happiness; but now, knowing this, I must throw something into the bargain. What would you think, then, Mr M'Arthur, of my daughter here as a make-weight on this occasion?"

M'Arthur looked confused and incredulous.

"Nay, I'm in earnest, Mr M'Arthur," continued Mr M'Donald. "You have won her, and have the best right to wear her; and, to tell you both a truth, I've long thought, and not with much displeasure, that you were not indifferent to each other; and therefore I anticipate no very serious

objections on this occasion on either side. What say you, Flora? Have you any objection to take Mr M'Arthur for your husband? Come now, be honest, be candid."

Flora looked to the ground, blushed, but made no reply.

"Answer me, Flora," said her father, "have you any objection to receive your deliverer as your husband?"

"I have always considered it one of my first duties to obey my father," replied Flora, in gentle accents.

"Enough, my dearest girl—enough," said her father, embracing her tenderly. "Now, Mr M'Arthur, he continued, smiling as he spoke, "will you have the goodness to state your objections to accepting the hand of my daughter?"

"I would, sir, very readily, if I had any," replied Mr M'Arthur, smiling in his turn, but almost entirely deprived of his presence of mind by the great and unexpected happiness and good fortune with which he found himself thus so suddenly blessed. "But—but ——" and he stammered out something about felicity, eternal gratitude, choice of his heart; which Mr M'Donald, as he could not make out, though he perceived and appreciated the feeling from which his confusion proceeded, suddenly arrested by saying—

"That'll do, Mac—that'll do. You would make a speech if you could, but it's not necessary. I know all you would say. But, Flora," he continued, now in a bantering humour—"Mac tells me that he had rescued you before he knew who you was; thus plainly intimating that it was no partiality towards you in particular that induced him to do what he did. What do you think of that?"

"Why, papa, I think the more of him for it," said Flora, blushing as she spoke. "His gallantry was the more generous, the more disinterested. It was a deed of true knight-errantry—the rescuing of a distressed damsel, without regard to who or what she was. She was in jeopardy, and that was enough for him."

"Excellent, Flora—very ingenious defence!" exclaimed

her father, laughing, and rubbing his hands with glee. "Commend me to a woman for ready apology, for prompt excuse, for defending what is indefensible."

We need not prolong the scene. In a fortnight afterwards, Miss Flora M'Donald was married to Duncan M'Arthur, Esq. of Rose Vale; and the latter became an equal partner in the concerns of his father-in-law, by which, in the course of a few years, he realised a handsome fortune, which was further increased on the death of his patron, who left him, for behoof of his wife and children, the whole of his immense wealth. Such is the story—and a true tale it is—of the little barelegged and bareheaded Highland boy whom we saw running wild on the banks of Loch Awe.

It is almost unnecessary to add—yet our story would be incomplete perhaps without it—that the parents of Mr M'Arthur participated in his prosperity, and that in precise proportion with its advancement. Indeed, to minister to the comforts of the authors of his being was one of his first cares, and one of the very first purposes to which he applied the means which his good fortune put in his power—a circumstance indicative of so amiable and beautiful a trait of character, as would alone lessen our wonder at the singular degree of prosperity that attended its possessor—leaving us, as it does, impressed with a conviction that no one who owned such an excellent disposition could be otherwise than successful in the world.

END OF VOL. VIII.

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